

SOCIAL AND RURAL ECONOMY  
OF  
NORTHERN INDIA

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VOL. II

BY  
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## PREFACE

More than three years have passed since the publication of the first volume. The reasons for the delay are too obvious to need explanation. New materials on the subject must have appeared during this interval. I fully realise that there was scope for correction and improvement in both the volumes. But as a Security Prisoner I had no access to necessary material nor to any useful help. Readers will kindly accept this apology for errors and omissions.

As in the earlier volume my thanks are due to the journals which published much of the contents of this book, to the C. U. Press which printed this through the most painful and difficult times, to friends and professors who helped and encouraged me, particularly to Profs. H. C. Raychaudhuri, M.A., Ph.D. and B. M. Barua, M.A., D.Lit., for whose kindness I have no words.

RAJSHAHI CENTRAL JAIL,

*July, 1945.*

ATINDRANATH BOSE

# CORRECTIONS

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75	34f	5 masa 1 masa	omitted
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Social significance of city plan Medium of artistic, religious and national expression Educative force

Long before Aryan migration, the non-Aryan settlers of India specialised in city building Remains of their art are seen in Mahenjo daro and Harappa with characteristically modern amenities like masonry drains and regular streets and baths The Aryans were primarily an agricultural and pastoral people but whether they had come or not from the cities of Mesopotamia and Iran, they might not have been strangers to the city life Without being good builders they could not possibly conquer the land from the original settlers who knew the use of fortified cities Hence though Vedic and Brahmanical cultures are essentially rural, a natural consequence of the consolidation of the Aryan tribal system into large states and kingdoms was the growth from the village

City building—non  
Aryan and Aryan



settlements into large cities planned on the same principles in which the different village units clustered around the royal palace or citadel. The Epics present a large number of cities in the reader's horizon, dotted all over northern India from Assam to Afghanistan. When Megasthenes visited India "the number is so great that it cannot be stated with precision" (Arrian, X). The Indian tract alone subdued by Alexander is reported by his companions to have contained as many as 5,000 towns, none less than Cos (Pliny, VI 17) <sup>1</sup>

The science of town-planning is so ancient in India that its origin is lost in antiquity. The treatise *śilpaśāstra* on *śilpaśāstra* and *śilpaśāstra*, the *Mānasa*, the *Mayamata*, the *Yuktikalpataru*, the *Devī-Purāṇa* and works on political science like the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Sūkraniti* all testify to its remote origin. The patronymic *Viśvakarma*—the architect divine, apotheosised master-builders like *Maya*, *Tvaṣṭar* and *Manu*, the mythological genealogies attributed to them," the position of the master-builder as high-priest or sacrificial expert, all confirm the supposition <sup>2</sup>. These and the position of the expounders of the science also prove that the social status of the civic architect was not low. The *Mayamata* avers that blue blood ran in his veins (*abhiṣṭavan*) <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The list was probably compiled from hearsay including every township or defensive outpost raised to hold the surrounding area in check.

<sup>2</sup> *Viśvakarmaprakāśa* Ch. I

<sup>3</sup> Some of the metal workers and carpenters of South India still retain the epithet 'śūrya' as their caste distinction. See Havell *Aryan Rule*, p. 128.

It is suggested that he descended in social estimation at least in the time of the *Mahabharata* since *Maya*, the builder of Yudhiṣṭhira's council house is spoken of as a *danava* being a non-Aryan. This possibly implies that the science having deteriorated among the Aryans there was a lack of competent experts among them. The supposition is far fetched. The non-Aryans being more advanced in the technique an expert of their race might well be summoned in preference to one from the Aryan stock. See B. B. Datta *Town Planning in Ancient India*, p. 14.

[The subject of town-planning is discussed under certain heads in the *Manasara* and the *Mayamata* which signify its perfection. These are (a) examination of soil (*bhūparikṣa*) (b) selection of site (*bhūmisamgraha*), (c) determination of directions (*dikpariccheda*), (d) division of the grounds into squares (*padavinyasa*), (e) the offerings (*vali-karmavidhāna*), (f) planning of villages and towns (*gramavinyāsa*, *nagaravinyasa*), (g) buildings and their different storeys (*bhumividhana*), (h) construction of gateways (*gopuravidhana*), (i) construction of temples (*mandapavidhāna*), (j) construction of royal palaces (*rāja-veśmavidhana*)] It will be noted that the construction of *Dvārāvātī* under the direction of *Kṛṣṇa* answers to these plans and procedures (*Devī-P*, *Vis P*, ch 58)

[The towns were generally grown out of villages] The plan of the Indo-Aryan town fairly reproduces on a grander scale the plan of the village. Thus [the terms *gama* and *nigama* are often indifferently used] The following story about the origin of the Kuru city of *Kammasadamma* is illuminating. "He (*Bodhisatta*) had a vast lake constructed near the *Banyan tree* and transported thither many families and founded a village. It grew into a big place supplied with 80,000 shops. And starting from the farthest limits of its branches he levelled the ground about the roots of the tree and surrounded it with a balustrade furnished with arches and gates, and the spirit of the tree was propitiated. And owing to the fact of the village having been settled on the spot where the ogre was converted, the place grew into the *nigama* of *Kammāsadamma*" (*Jat V* 511). The difference between a *gama* and a *nigama* is thus one of degree.

Treatment of the subject

Origin of cities  
1 From expansion of villages

These different circumstances of their origin explain the diversity in character of Indian cities. There were *pattanas* or sea ports. There were *nigamas* or market towns situated on trade routes.<sup>1</sup> There were *viharas* or university towns, temple cities, forts with bastions and battlements termed *durga*. A medley of other names are given in the *śilpaśāstras*, viz., *nagara rajadhami*, *kheta*, *lharvata*, *śivira*, *senamulha*, *slandhava*, *sthanīya*, *dronamukha*, *kotma*, *lolaka* and so on. The cities also varied in shape—square or rectangular, circular or elliptic, lotus like or bow shaped, each having technical appellations for its variety, and each with the peculiar planning of streets and distribution of public places and buildings.<sup>2</sup>

Thus quite promiscuously village settlements might outgrow their rural framework and attain to urban importance. Despite their natural growth, at certain stages they underwent the skill of a scheming technician. For example, to provide for increasing population and traffic, to improve the defences and broaden the streets, the ruler had to call for the civic engineer (*sthapati*). Besides there are detailed instructions laid down in the *śilpaśāstras* and concrete instances in other literature, of cities founded with a deliberate planning at the very inception. The rules for the guidance of the builder demanded the preparation of maps indicating density of population in different parts, allocation of sites for castes and professions, distribution of residential, business and industrial areas, of parks and squares with space. When improving or extending existing towns he has to make his project without violently dislocating the existing order and with a

<sup>1</sup> Literally *nagara* means a trade-route.

<sup>2</sup> See Part II. Town Planning in Ancient India (Ch. VIII-VI).

consideration for temples, buildings and water-works of importance. As soil specialist he has to survey the ground for its fertility, solidity and mineral resources; if the city is on river or on sea he has to study the probability of diluvion or erosion. He has to survey general traffic, sewage and water-supply, strategic points of offence and defence, folks in the neighbourhood, trees and plants suitable for culture and verdal beautification and all possibilities for the sanitation and aesthetics of the city. This would meet the demands of current political concepts. The capital ought to have the advantages of the hills, plains and seas, command vegetable, animal and mineral resources and be a centre of quick commercial activity. It should be on river bank if not on sea-shore, surrounded by walls (prākāra) and ditches (parikhā) with four gates in four directions, provided with wells, tanks and pools, good roads and parks in roads, and well-constructed taverns, temples and inns for travellers (Śukranīti, I. 425-33). This is not an idealistic utopia but clearly recalls the numerous city descriptions given in Pali and Sanskrit works. Indian architecture further lays down technical instructions as to road-making, *e.g.*, that they should be like the back of a tortoise, *i.e.*, high in the middle and sloping towards the sides where they are provided with drains and that they should be regularly watered and gravelled and repaired every year (I. 531- 37).<sup>1</sup>

The real was not at all out of this standard. The lay-out of Indian cities from the far off Sākala in the Punjab to the distant Campā in Anga is realistically set forth in popular stories with minute details.

<sup>1</sup> The necessity of watering roads and keeping them clear was fully realised. The streets of Ayodhya were regularly watered. Dropping filth on king's highroad is to be fined with 2 *kāṣṭhāṇas* and the filth immediately removed by the offender. *Manu*, IX 282

“Just as the architect of a city, when he wants to build one, would first search out a pleasant spot of ground, with which no fault can be found, even with no hills or gullies in it, free from rough ground and rocks, not open to the danger of attack. And then when he has made plain any rough places there may still be on it, he would clear it thoroughly of all stumps and stakes, and would proceed to build there a city fine, and regular, measured out into suitable quarters, with trenches and ramparts thrown out around it, with strong gateways, watch towers and battlements, with wide squares and open places and junctions (where two roads meet) with clean and even highroads, with regular lines of open shops, well-provided with parks and gardens and lakes and lotus ponds and wells, adorned with many kinds of temples to the gods, free from every fault. And in course of time that city might become mighty and prosperous, filled with stores of food, peaceful and glorious, happy, free from distress and calamity, the meeting place of all sorts and conditions of men. Nobles, Brahmanas—all these coming to take up their residence there, and finding the new city to be regular, faultless perfect and pleasant.”

Yatbā nagaravaddhaki nagaram māpetukāmo patha-  
mam tava samam anunnatam-anonītam asakkharapāsanam  
nirupaddavam anavajjam ramaniyam bhumibhagam anu-  
loketva yam tattha visamam tam samam karapetvā khānu-  
kantakam visodhāpetva tattha nagaram māpeyya sobhanam  
vibhattam bhagaso mitam ukkinna parikkhapākāram dalha-  
gopur-attala-kottakam puthu--caccara-catukkasandhi singhā-  
takam suci samatala-rajamaggam suvibhatta-antarāpanam  
aram uyyana-talaka-pokkharanī-udapana-sampannam bahu-  
vidha-devatthāna-patimanditam sabba-dosavirohitam... ..  
atha tam nagaram aparena samayena iddham bhaveyya  
phitam subhikkham khemam samiddham sīvam anītikam  
nirupaddavam nanajana samākulam. . . tam nagaram

vāsaya upagatā nānāvisayino janā navam suvibhattam  
adosam-anavajjam ramanīyam tam nagaram passitvā.....  
(Mil. 330 f; cf. 34, 1 f.)

The city of Indraprastha laid out by Maya for the sons of Pāṇḍu, the city of Dvārāvātī reconstructed by Viśvakarmā under the orders of Śrīkṛṣṇa are concrete instances of such planned cities which were no promiscuous growth. Another picture gives :

“Behold..... a city furnished with solid foundations and with many gateways and walls and with many pleasant spots where four roads meet. Pillars and trenches, bars and bolts, watch-towers and gates.....

“See various types of birds in the roads under the gateways.....

“See a marvellous city with grand walls, making the hairs stand erect with wonder, pleasant with banners upraised, and with its sands all of gold,—see the hermitages divided regularly in blocks, and the different houses and their yards, with streets and blind lanes between.

“Behold the drinking shops and taverns, the slaughter house and cooks’ shops and the harlots and wantons.... the garland weavers, the washermen, the astrologers, the cloth merchants, the gold-workers, the jewellers.

“Crowds are gathered here of men and women, see the seats tiers beyond tiers..... See the wrestlers and the crowd striking their doubled arms, see the strikers and the stricken.....” (Jāt. VI 276.)

The walls and ditches of the city with its belt of stately trees presented the town a solidarity and corporate entity and prevented the mushroom growth of clumsy outskirts about them. But these defensive works stood on the way of easy expansion. This might be one of the subsidiary reasons which led to the later exclusion of the untouchables and pariahs outside the city gate. The commonest method of town extension,

Municipal extension

as in the case of Divravati, was to dismantle the old walls, fill up the moats and erect a new boundary. As this was expensive and laborious, sometimes a ward or sub town was built adjoining the wall of the main city which occasionally equalled in eminence or even eclipsed the original one. The city of Puri is supposed to have once possessed such a sub town the ruins of which are still existing. Kaveripaddanam is said to have been originally divided into the two parts of Maruvur Pakkam and Paddini Pakkam<sup>1</sup>. Giribaja and Rajagaba probably offered a similar instance.

At the time of Buddha, the six great cities of India (that is to say, the provinces which are now the United Provinces and Bihar) enumerated in contrast to a *khuddakanagara* or *salhanagara* were Campa, Rajagaba, Savatthi, Saketa, Kosambi and Baranasi which were in Ānanda's estimation proper places to receive his Lord at the time of *nibbana* (*Mahaparinibbana Sutta*).

Campa was the capital of Anga, the country to the east of Magadha. Its site is discovered at modern Bhagalpur. It lost its independence to Magadha under Bimbisara which appears to have never been regained. According to Hemchandra's *Sthaviravali* and *Parisistaparva*, after Bimbisara's death Ajatasatru made Campa his capital, but his son shifted to the newly built city of Pataliputra (Canto VI). In the *Anusasanaparva* it is said that the city was surrounded by groves of Campaka trees (42). The *Jatakas* represent it as equipped with gates, watch towers and walls (*dvarattalapaḥara*, VI 32). Hiuen Tsang witnessed these walls and the vestiges of the mound on which they stood are still existing surrounded by a ditch on three sides and by the Ganges in the north. It

<sup>1</sup> V. Kanakasabha Pliha: *The Tamils 1600 years ago* pp 24 f

was sacred to the Jains too as Candrikapuri or Candrapuri. It was a great emporium whence caravan started with 500 cartloads of wares (Jat IV 350)

Saketa was another important Kosala city and sometimes its capital (Mahavastu, I 348, Jat III 270). Its site has been discovered in the Unao district of Oudh. Its identification with Ayodhya is doubted by Rhys Davids, for both are mentioned as existing in Buddha's time. The present city of Ayodhya is according to him at a corner of Saketa. "They were possibly adjoining, like London and Westminster." But in the Ramayana and in Kalidasa's Raghuvamsha Saketa has been explicitly called the capital of King Dasaratha although that position is habitually attributed to Ayodhya. The city must have had two names which are indiscriminately used both in Pali and Sanskrit.

Ayodhya is unimportant in the Pali canonical works and is not observed in the Mahabharata. In the Ramayana, it puts in with the full grandeur of a metropolis. Situated on the banks of the Sarayu, it was a well-fortified city, protected on the other sides by a deeply excavated moat kept continually filled with water, 12 *yojanas* in length and 3 *yojanas* in breadth. Dasaratha multiplied its habitations (*purim avasayamasa*). The city had fine wide streets full of traffic, symmetrically arranged, regularly watered and occasionally strewn with full bloomed flowers. It had massive gates, was intersected with small crossways (*suvibhaktantarapanam*) equipped with mechanical contrivances and arms (*sarvyantryudhavati*), inhabited by all sorts of mechanics (*sarvasilpi*) provided with dramatic parties (*bahunatika samghaisca samyuktam*), fitted with parks and mango gardens and encircled by a line of big Sala trees.



The fronts of its buildings were harmoniously arranged (*sunivesita-veśmantam*) It was frequented by merchants from different countries and garnered with paddy and rice (I 5 9 ff). It had the auspicious shape of a bow, the string being along the river (*Kālikā Purana*, 84, 237 f)<sup>1</sup> *Sāketa* is referred to as *Sagoda* by Ptolemy (2.25)

Kosāmbi was capital of the Vatsas or Vamsas (*Jāt IV. 28, VI 236*) on the *Jamunā* Its  
 5 Kosambi king was Udayana whose elopement and marriage with Vasavadattā, the princess of Avanti form the theme of a dramatic legend "It was the most important *entrepôt* for both goods and passengers coming to Kosala and Magadha from the south and west."<sup>2</sup>

Baranasi, situated at the confluence of the Ganges and  
 6 Baranasi the Gumti (*Mbh XIII 30*) was the capital of Kasi which, at the time of Buddha, formed part of the kingdom of Kosala It was a seat of Buddhist learning and philosophy, remains of which are scattered at Sarnath But when Huen Tsang visited the city, "there were twenty Deva temples, the towers and halls of which are of sculptured stone and carved wood. The foliage of trees combines to shade (the sites), while the pure streams of water encircle them" Like *Taxila* it later attained the fame of a university town Although at the time when the *Jatakas* were composed it was a centre of learning of some standing (I 436, 447, 463, III 537), students had to travel all the way to *Taxila* from Benares for the higher courses of *sippas* and *vijjās* At that time it was a great centre of industries (I 98) and a big and prosperous city, 12 *yojanas* in extent (II 402)—*pakāraparikkhepo*

<sup>1</sup> In the *Manasara* and the *Mayamata* this design of a village or town is called *Karmuka*

<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids *loc cit*

dvādasayojaniko hoti, idam assā autarabāhīram pana tiyojanasatikarattṭham (I. 125).

7 Vesālī Ananda's list is far from exhaustive; and even in Buddha's time, in the Madhyadesa itself, the cradle of his faith, there were other cities which could claim rank with the aforesaid ones. Vesālī, the capital of the Vajjis, a powerful confederation of republican tribes was situated in the Muzaffarpur district (Basarh) on the left bank of the Gandak (Rām. I. 1). It is said to be three *yojanas* north of the Ganges and five *yojanas* from Rājagaha (Com. on Sut. II. 1). The Jātakas aver that in Buddha's time it was a highly prosperous city (paramasobhaggapattam) encompassed by a triple wall each a *yojana* distant from the next, having three gates with watch-towers (I. 504). According to the Mahāvagga, "at that time (Buddha's) Vesālī was an opulent (iddhā), prosperous (phitā), populous (bahujanā) town, crowded with people (ākiṇṇamanussā), abundant with food (subhikkhā). There were 7,707 storeyed buildings (pāsāda), 7,707 pinnacled buildings (kūṭāgāra), 7,707 pleasure grounds (ārāma), 7,707 lotus ponds (pokkharāṇi)" (VIII. 1). The prosperity was no doubt eclipsed by Pāṭaliputra when Ajātasatru annexed the land of the Vajjis to Magadha and built the new city to hold them under subjection.

8 Mithilā In the same district of Muzaffarpur has been located the city of Mithilā (Janakpur), capital of Videha, said to have been seven *yojanas* in extent (circumference ? sattayojane mithilānagare, Jāt. III. 365, IV. 315, VI. 246). It was undoubtedly a big and opulent city, for at its four gates there were four *nigamas* or wards called the East Town (pācīnayavamañjhaka), the South Town, the West Town and the North Town each inhabited by wealthy merchants (seṭṭhi, anuseṭṭhi, VI. 330 f). In the Mahaummagga Jātaka it is said that a king dug three moats round it,—a water-moat, a mud-moat and

a dry-moat.<sup>1</sup> The great Videhan king Janaka ruled in this city.

According to a long versical narrative, Mithilā was spacious and splendid (*visālam sabbatopabham*), divided into well-measured blocks (*vibhattam bhāgaso mitam*) having many walls and gates (*bahupākātoranam*), strong towers and palaces (*dalhamatṭālakotthakam*), intersected by big roads (*suvibhattam mahāpatham*), laid out with shops at regular intervals (*suvibhattantarāpanam*), thick with traffic of carts and chariots (*gavāssaratthapīḷitam*) beautified with parks and gardens (*ārāmavanamālinim*) (*Jāt. VI. 46 ff.*). The account of the *Mahābhārata* is closely similar. The city was ruled over by Janaka and "adorned with the flags of various guilds." It was "a beautiful town resounding with the noise of sacrifices and festivities," "furnished with splendid gateways, abounding with palatial residences." "Protected by walls on all sides, it had many splendid buildings to boast of. That delightful town was also filled with innumerable cars. Its streets and roads were many and well laid and many of them were lined with shops. And it was full of horses and cars and elephants and warriors. And the citizens were all in health and joy and they were always engaged in festivities" (*III. 206. 6-9.*).

Kapilavastu was the headquarters of the Sākya another republican tribe, and the birth-place of Buddha. It comprised of several villages or wards, of which one was Lummini, where Buddha was born and which is identified with Runmindei where Aśoka's Pillar Edict records the commutation of *bali* and reduction of *bhāga* to 1/8 for the villagers. Kapilavastu is located in Gorakhpur district on the border of Nepal and the United Provinces from archaeological discoveries and

<sup>1</sup> The *Arthashastra* enjoins three ditches round a city (*II 3*). The *Devī Purāṇa* says that the number should be according to the requirements of the ground (*72 28*).

submitted to Alexander when he invaded it. Under the Mauryas it remained a viceregal centre, a large city and governed by good laws (Str. XV. i. 28). After them it was successively the capital of the Bactrian, Saka and Pahlava kings. Arrian describes the city as great and wealthy (V. 8) and as the most populous that lay between the Indus and the Hydaspes. Strabo tells the same thing and with Hiuen Tsang praises the fertility of its soil (XV. i. 17, 28). The latter notices its springs and water courses which account for this fertility. Pliny calls it a famous city, and states that it was situated on a level where the hills sank down into plains. Near the middle of the 1st century A.D. Appollonius of Tyana and his companion Damis are reported to have visited it and Philostratos the biographer described it as being about the size of Nineveh, walled like a Greek city and the residence of a sovereign. The city was "divided into narrow streets with great regularity" reminding the travellers of Athens. There was also a garden, one stadium long with a tank in the midst filled with cool and refreshing streams. Outside the wall was a beautiful temple of porphyry, wherein was a shrine round which were hung pictures on copper tablets representing the feats of Alexander and Poros (Priaulx's Appollon., pp. 13 ff).

The valley in which the remains of Taxila lie, is a singularly pleasant one, well-watered by the Haro river and its tributaries, and protected by a girdle of hills; on the north and east by the snow-mountains of Hazra and the Murree ridge, on the south and west by the well-known Margalla spur and other lower eminences. "This position on the great trade-route which used to connect Hindustan with Central and Western Asia, coupled with the strength of its natural defences, the fertility of the soil, and a constant supply of good water,

Its natural advantages

vogue from some other origin.<sup>1</sup> The name may have been derived from the elephant-tusk or ivory for which Kalinga was famous (Arth I 2). The city has been identified by Cunningham with Rajamahendri, and by others with Puri. It may more plausibly be placed at Dantan on the Kasai in Midnapore district. At the time of Kharavela the capital was removed farther south where the new city of Kalinga (Mukhalingam and adjacent ruins in the Ganjam district) was built and a settlement of 100 masons was created free from revenue, obviously for further beautification of the city (Hathigumpha In.)

Mathura (a little south of modern Mathura) on the Jumna, the capital of the Surasenas was the reputed birth-place of Kṛṣṇa and the scene of his juvenile adventures. In Buddha's time it is barely mentioned while in the Milinda it is reported to be one of the famous places in India (331). Hence "the time of its greatest growth must have been between these dates."<sup>2</sup> Pliny knows the city. Arrian knows it as a great city and Ptolemy as 'the city of the gods'. This is a cogent observation for under the Kusānas it became the seat of Jaina religion and learning and dotted with numerous sculptures and votive inscriptions. The Uttarakanda of the Rāmāyana records that Satrugṇa founded it after slaying Lavana, that it stood on the Jamuna the shape of a half-moon,<sup>3</sup> that its land was fertile and productive, that its shops teemed with merchandise, that its buildings were reconstructed and parks and squares laid out and that it flourished with brisk business transactions carried out by merchants from

<sup>1</sup> Cf. how under the influence of Buddhist legends Takṣaśila (hewn rock) became Takṣaśira (severed head) and Adakṣatra (Adi's parasol) became Abhikṣatra (parasol of snake's hood)

<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids, Buddhist India

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ayodhya and the Karmuka design. *Ardhacandra* is not crescent

different countries (83. 9 ff).<sup>1</sup> The Harivamsa confirms the same report stating that it was like a half-moon along the Jamunā, that it was rich in gardens and groves (udyānavana-sampanna) and decorated with ramparts and turrets (chayātālaka keyūrah) (Viṣṇuparva, ch. 54). "It was sufficiently famous for the other Madhurā in Tinnevely first mentioned in the Mahāvamsa to be named after it."<sup>2</sup>

Dwārakā or Dvārāvātī said in the Mahābhārata to have been founded by Śrīkṛṣṇa by renovation of the old sea-coast city of Kuśāsthālī is perhaps of later growth like Mathurā. Yule and Lassen have identified this with the Baraca of the Periplus and Barake of Ptolemy (I. 94) on the tip of the Kathiawad Peninsula the gulf whereof was very difficult for navigation (40). The Harivamsa describes the construction of the city in great details. When Śrīkṛṣṇa communicated his plan to the chief architect Viśwakarmā, he suggested a further extension for the accommodation of the citizens. Śrīkṛṣṇa

proceeded with his own and realised his error after a few years. A new scheme was initiated and the municipal area extended to 12 *yojanas* × 8 *yojanas*. Old walls were dismantled and old ditches dumped. The surrounding area was cleared and prepared for the extension. Śrīkṛṣṇa gave instructions that building plots were to be properly spaced, triangular and quadrangular 'islands' were to be created on the crossways and other suitable spots; the main thoroughfares were to be measured up, the orientation of buildings ascertained. Thus ordered, the Yādavas selected the site, measured up the boundary lines, divided the plots and on an auspicious day made offerings to the presiding deities of the *vāstu*. Then

<sup>1</sup> The Jains thus appear as a mercantile community even in the early Christian centuries

<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids. *Buddhist India*.

Kṛṣṇa reiterated his instructions and laid special stress on the establishment of temples. The orders were carried out and special sites reserved for trees. The original city had its traffic mainly through lanes and bye lanes (*rathyā-koti-sahasradhyā*). In the enlarged city there were eight main roads—four latitudinal, four longitudinal—surrounded by a boulevard. Sixteen public squares were erected at the sixteen cross-sections.<sup>1</sup> The city was bedecked with reservoirs of pure water troughs and sheds for drinking water, parks, orchards and gardens. Fortifications were built and ditches excavated around it which looked as wide and deep as the river Ganges. Defensive weapons and missiles were stored in large number (*Viṣṇuparva*, chs 58, 98).

The veracity of these minute details may be doubted with regard to the city of Dvārakā, but by no means with regard to the general principles of town planning. The building of the Kuru township of Kammasadamma as described in the Jātaka story and already quoted, reflects the same principles in their original and nebulous form. The *śilpa-śāstras* develop the same principles into a civic science and the builders of an age of progressive urbanisation gave effect to them with ingenious additions to meet the military, economic, religious, sanitary and aesthetic requirements of the times. Such radical reconstructions as described in the *Harivamśa* and in the theoretical works also presuppose a large control on private owners, more extensive than any modern improvement trust can boast of. No private interest was allowed to stand on the way against what was conceived as a public necessity.<sup>2</sup>

Control of Municipal  
authorities

<sup>1</sup> Thus Dvārakā had six longitudinal streets including the boulevard while Calcutta can boast of at most five—viz. Circular Road, College-Wellesley Street, Chitpore-Chowringhee Road, Strand Road.

<sup>2</sup> The *Sakrañjī* says that private ownership should not be allowed in towns. Plots of ground were allotted to persons during the *r* life time only for laying out gardens and erecting houses thereon. Ch II II 401-04.

As Dwārakā was built by the divine architect Viśwakarmā under the orders of king Śrīkrṣṇa, so the city of Indraprastha was constructed by the demon Maya at the requisition of king Yudhiṣṭhira. At the site cleared by the conflagration of the Khāṇḍava forest, on the banks of the Jamunā arose the stately city defended with sea-like ditches and sky-scraping parapets and adorned with gates, towers and palatial buildings. There was a fine lay-out of large thoroughfares. There were magnificent houses, pleasant retreats, fine museums, artificial hills, numerous tanks brimming with water, beautiful lakes fragrant with lilies and lotuses, and lovely with varieties of birds, many charming parks and gardens with tanks at the centres and numberless fine ponds (Mbh. I. 217). Ptolemy notices this city as Indabara (I. 49).

17 Indraprastha  
 18. Sagala.  
 Sāgala or Sākala identified by Fleet with modern Sialkot in the Lahore division is said to have been the capital of Madra (Jāt. IV. 230). It was ruled over by the Madra king Śalya, the brother of Pāṇḍu's wife who participated in the Bhārata war (Mbh. II. 32). It was also ruled over by king Aśwapati, father of Sāvitrī (Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 206). Cunningham says that it was Alexander's Sangala which is known to have offered him a stout resistance, although the position disagrees with that assigned by Alexander's historians.<sup>1</sup> It was the capital of the Greek king Demetrius after his expedition from Bactria and of his successors down to Dionysius. It is referred to as Euthydemia by Ptolemy (I. 46). It undoubtedly rose to the acme of its glory under king Menander. The Milindapañho opens with a full-throated description of the Yona city which is quoted at the beginning of this Book and which substantially recalls the

<sup>1</sup> Arrian and Curtius have noted that this was to the east of the Ravi whereas Sākala according to the Kārnāparva was to its west.



picture of Dwaraka and elaborates upon those of Vesali, Indraprastha and other cities

With the city of Pataliputra we pass the quicksands of legends and folklore and tread on firmer historical ground. The stages of its evolution are not shrouded in the midst of Epic and Purāṇic traditions. In the earlier Pālī literature, supposed to be contemporary of Buddha, it is referred to as Pataligama. But it had great strategic and commercial value, situated as it was on the confluence of the Ganges and the Son (Erannoboas or Hiranyavaha) one of its largest tributaries. It was near to the land of the Vajjis whose capital Vesālī was conquered by Ajātasattu. Hence the Magadhan king deputed his astute ministers Sunidha and Vassakīra to convert it into a fort in order to hold the Vajjis in check (Mv VI 28, Jatakas). His successor Udayin removed from Rājagaha to this new city. Thenceforth Pataliputra remained the holder of imperial tradition under the successive dynasties of Śaśunaga, Nanda, Maurya, Sunga, Kanva, Andhra and the Gupta. After the Guptas Kanauj competed with it and finally it was completely overshadowed by the parvenu. When Fa-hien visited it, it was still like "the work of genius beyond the power of human skill." But in Hsuen Tsang's time all that remained of the splendid metropolis were heaps of debris and an insignificant village consisting of about 200 or 300 miserable houses. The city thus, after a shining career of roughly 900 years sank within a century to the oblivion from which it arose in the brief space of a few decades.

According to Megasthenes, Palibothra was the greatest city in India, the shape of a parallelogram, 80 stadia along the river and 15 stadia in breadth, encompassed with a wooden wall (the remains of which have been unearthed and preserved), pierced with loop holes for the discharge of arrows, crowned with 570 towers and 64 gates, which was

surrounded by a ditch 600 feet wide and 45 feet deep for defence and for receiving the sewage of the city. The royal palace situated in the centre, surpassed the splendour of Susa and Ecbatana (Str. XV : 35 f, Arrian, 10). Obviously it attracted from all northern India its overland and river-borne trade. It is recorded from the mouth of Buddha that as far as Aryan people resort, as far as merchants travel, Pataliputra will be the premier city, a centre for the interchange of all kinds of wares (*yāvata* Ānanda, āryam āyatanam yāvata vanippatho idam aggana-garam bhavissati Pataliputtam putabhedanam, Dn. XVI : 23). The 'prophecy' was evidently interpolated in a day when Pataliputra was no longer a fishing village but the unrivalled metropolis of Magadha.

Tosali has been decisively located with the finding of the name in the Aśoka inscriptions on the 20 Tosali Dhauli rock. Vestiges of a larger city have been discovered not far from the site of the monument and it is almost certain now that this was Aśoka's capital in the province of Orissa. It probably continued to be so till the time of Ptolemy who called it a metropolis but wrongly placed it to the east of the Ganges thus misleading Lassen to locate it somewhere in the province of Dhakkā. The city stood on the margin of a pool called Kośala-Gangā and probably hence the compound Tośala-Kosalakas in the Brahmānda-Purāna (ch. 51) as suggested by Wilford.

Kalhāna the chronicler of Kashmir says that the city of 21 Srinagari Srinagari in Kashmir was built by Aśoka which was most important on account of the 96 lacs of houses resplendent with wealth (Rāj. I. 104). Cunningham identifies this with the present village of Pandresthān (Purāndhusthāna or old capital) on the right bank of the Vitastā some 3 miles above modern Srinagari.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For discussion on Cunningham's views see Stein's note on Rāj. I. 104, translation

arrived here from all parts of India including Magadha.

26 *Bharukaccha* Bhārūkaccha or Bhrgukaccha or Barygaza of the Greeks was on the site of modern

Broach the sea-port of the kingdom of Bhāru (Jāt. IV. 137) which may have flourished after the waning of Roruka out of importance (Div. pp. 511 ff). Sūrpāraka was the

27 *Surpareka* capital of Aparānta or Northern Konkan.<sup>1</sup>

It has been satisfactorily identified with the Ophir to which Solomon sent his ships hired from the Tyrians. Supārā had such a coastal situation that western traders crossing the ocean under the monsoon would naturally direct their course thither. The name Supārā is almost identical with that of Ophir when it takes an initial 'S' becoming Sophara as in the Septuagint and Sofir which is the Coptic name for India.<sup>2</sup> Bharukaccha and Suppāraka were the great ports of the Andhras and Sāta-vāhanas and contributed to their phenomenal wealth. The Periplus refers to another sea-port on the western coast, viz.,

28 *Barbaricum* Barbaricum (Barberci—Ptolemy, l. 60), the port of the Seythuan metropolis of

Patala and Minnagara (38) or, according to Sanskrit, of Barbara country. It also refers to the great eastern empo-

29 *Tamralipta* rium of Tāmralipta (modern Tamruk) situated at the mouth of the Ganges. It

is also mentioned by Ptolemy (Tamakitēs, l. 73) and in the Mahābhārata and the Purānas. From this port Vijaya is said to have sailed for and conquered Ceylon.<sup>3</sup>

So far for the Indian cities known over the globe for their phenomenal wealth and luxury all of which have

<sup>1</sup> R. G. Bhandarkar, *History of the Deccan*, III, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Many Biblical authorities locate Ophir on the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf, the Indian names for the products showing only that the place was a trading centre with India.

<sup>3</sup> For the trade of these countries, see *infra*, Bk. III, Ch. V.

sunk down to non-entity and some to oblivion with amazing rapidity leaving behind nothing but the name and dilapidated bricks to recall their glory. The list is far from comprehensive for our space and period. It is impossible to disentangle the identity and origin of the innumerable cities from their mythic cobwebs. But the foregoing

*Social significance  
of town planning*

account may help to give a general picture of cities of which there is a marked uniformity over the differences of time and

place, and of the various conditions of their development, viz., military, demographic, industrial and commercial. The city architecture also brings forth the social life of town dwellers. The richer people, the military and mercantile magnates resorted to cities in large numbers and at their behests the artists poured their skill on public buildings to give expression to the happy life, the traditions and ideals of their masters. They decorated the temples, stupas and caves with relief sculptures presenting pictorially the soul stirring episodes from the career of Rama, Buddha, Hanumat, Krishna, Shiva, Vishnu and other

*Educative influence  
of towns*

divine or sacred lives. The epics, legends and folklores of the land were an inexhaustible

store of material for these artistic, religious and martial expressions. These impulses combined with the national ideal which, blazoned forth from the public buildings inculcated humanising and ennobling sentiments. The mute walls and colonnades of these buildings were thus great educative agents disseminating national culture. Besides being the nurseries of corporate ideals and military and artistic endeavours Indian cities were great schools of nationalism in its most liberal and comprehensive sense. It was this characteristic which gave a peculiar stamp to Indian civic life and gave Indian cities its distinctive mark of individuality which evoked the wonder and admiration of their visitors.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

The village and the town    No sharp cleavage    Distinction    Simplicity and uniformity *vs* complexity and diversity

Extension of co-operation    Charitable and religious activities    Aldermen  
Municipal administration —bureaucratic and democratic control    Municipal functions

The corporate person    Public places and civic amenities

As explained in the previous chapter, the town was an automatic, organic growth from the village. This is proved not only by the plan of the city or village given in the *śilpaśāstras* and the external features like gates, walls and public works in the description of both, methods of local government, public institutions and popular customs as seen in the *pura* or *nigama* are mostly logical developments from those in the *gāma*.

There was no complete cleavage between the town and countryside. But the antiquity of the Sanskrit words '*pura*' and '*janapada*' show that a distinction had appeared early. In the *Jātakas* *janapada* and *nigama* are often compounded (III 513, IV. 262, 449, V 221, VI 15, Mil 121). To the townsfolk the village churl, the man from the *dehāt* was a different social category although relations were not always bad. We come across matrimonial transactions between the two parties sometimes successfully performed (*Rājagahaśettḥu attano puttassa janapadaśettḥuno dhītaram ānesi*, IV 37) and on other occasions broken down when the parties

(nagaravasīno, janapadavāsīno) fell to abusing each other (I 257) Trade transactions were also there —Savatthu-nagaravāsī kī'eko kutumbiko ekena jānapadakutumbikena saddhim vohāram akasī (II 203)

⌈The essential difference was in the economic structure of towns and villages. The villages were the productive units of the country given to tillage and small handicrafts. The towns were centres for distribution and exchange, of big business and industrial combines where, besides its own wealth, the wealth of the country accumulated and attracted in its turn learning and culture as well as luxuries and parasite professions like stage-acting, dancing, singing, buffoonery, gambling, tavern-keeping and prostitution. The more sophisticated, luxurious and heterogeneous habits of the town are therefore apparent. This is clearly brought forth in the Arthashastra chapter on Janapadanivesāṇa or foundation of villages. No guilds other than local co-operative guilds are allowed entrance into them. Nor are there to be public halls (sālāḥ) for disport and pleasure. Actors, dancers, singers, music-players, buffoons (vāḡjīvanas) and bards (kuśilava) are not allowed to enter for profit and disturb the work of villagers who being helpless are always bent upon their field (niraśrayatvat grāmanām ksetrābhinatatvat, I 1) The jealous attempt to guard agriculture against the corrupting diversions of the town shows clearly that there was a deep-seated difference and loss of contact in town life and country life, thanks to which Megasthenes observed that "husbandmen themselves with their wives and children live in the country and entirely avoid going into town" (Diod. II. 40)

But the transition was gradual, and not all the wholesome features of the *gāma* were lost in the process. The best part of it was the translation of the rural associate life to a civic consciousness and to the idea of a municipal corporation with all its legal consequences

In its corporate life and co operative activities the *nigama* is a replica of the *gama* described above<sup>1</sup>

Corporate life of towns  
streets and wards

Only we find the spirit of co operation extended from the village whole to the streets and wards of the municipality "That the street is a kind of club, the very architecture, with its verandas and stone couches bear witness to This co operative effort was the mainspring of philanthropic and religious activity Street corporations (*vithasabha*genā), municipal wards and sometimes all citizens collectively at Savatthi and at Rajagaha (*gama-bandhanena bahu ekato hutva, sakālanigaraivasino chandakam samharitva*) were active in the entertainment of Buddha and the Brethren (Jat I 422, II 45 196 286) 'On this occasion all the inhabitants had made such a collection of all necessities, but counsels were divided some demanded that this be given to the heretics some speaking for those who followed the Buddha then it was proposed to divide on the question and accordingly they divided, those who were for the Buddha were in the majority'<sup>2</sup> We have noticed the *gothi* of the Sanchi and Bhittiprolu inscriptions meaning thereby a committee of trustees in charge of a temple<sup>3</sup> or of charitable institutions

Benevolent works

"At Benares free education and board were voted by the town to penniless hinds' (Jat I 239, 451) We find a market town where a great deal of rice was distributed by ticket and special meals were given (*eko nigamagamo tittva bahuni salakabhatta pakkhika bhattani atthi*, Jat II 209) Service of humanity was placed in the fore front of the

<sup>1</sup> Book I Ch IV

<sup>2</sup> Sister Nivedita *Civic and National Ideals*

<sup>3</sup> The whole procedure is described in detail in its application to the Samgha in Cv IV 9 10 14

<sup>4</sup> The communal tradition of public worship of gods expenses being met by local subscriptions survive to-day Of course the holy ground of the temple was not open to the parish

municipal programme Charitable dispensaries and hospitals meant for the poor and the helpless are observed and described in detail by Fa-hien in several cities of the eastern countries

This and other aspects of corporate activity and the growth of the corporation as a legal body are hinted at in a Jātaka verse and lucidly explained in the commentary Although this comes with reference to the *pūga* a corporate body which cannot be strictly identified with a town corporation, it can be taken as fairly indicative of the functions of the latter since the *puga* was not exactly a craft-guild and represents a synthesis of larger interests as happen to exist side by side in towns<sup>1</sup> They appear in hell in a fiery pit who raise a loan on behalf of the corporation and under false pretences misappropriate the money

Ye keci pugāyatanāssa hetu  
sakkhūṃ kūtva naṃ jāpayanti, IV 108

Commentary — Okāse satī danam vā dassāma pujaṃ vā pīvattessāma vihāram va karissāma samkaddhivā thapitāssa pūgasantakassa dhanassa hetu, Japayantīti taṃ dhanam yathāruccim khīditvā gana-jetthakānam lañcam datva asukattāne ettakam vayakaranam gatam asukattāne ambheli ettakam dinnān ti kutasakkhūṃ datvā taṃ naṃ jāpayanti vināsentī.

Thus the *puga* can raise money for charity, for public worship or to raise a monastery The aldermen who were in charge of these funds had to give accounts of expenditure under different heads If these people were purchased by bribe and public money misappropriated under false pretences perdition was in store for the offender The lawgivers were aware of this abuse. "Whatever loan," says

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, p. 237



Katyāyana, "raised for public purposes is consumed or employed for one's self should be restored by him"

Ganamuddiśya yat kinchit lityarnam bhakṣitam bhavet  
atmartham vimyuktam ca devam tatreva tad bhavet

(Cf Vis V 167, Yaj II 187)

About the aldermen or members of a town corporation (*negama*) the Bhattiprolu Inscription (No 8) enumerates twenty one even giving their names<sup>1</sup>

They obviously have their counterpart in the *grama* *urddhas* of the Arthaśāstra. But the Bhattiprolu Inscription certainly points to a fuller municipal life in the town than in the village. And this is corroborated with additional

data by Megasthenes' account about

Municipal administration  
of Pataliputra

Pataliputra "Those who have charge of the city are divided into six bodies of five

each. The first looks after everything relating to industrial arts, the second to care of foreigners, the third to registration of births and deaths, the fourth to control of trade, the fifth to sale and auction and the sixth to collection of tithe. Collectively they attend to matters of "general interest, as the keeping of public buildings in proper repair, the regulation of prices, the care of markets, harbours and temples" (Str. IV 1 51). The picture of course appears to be one of complete official control and not of a self governing body. But the executive machinery with departmental divisions and standing committees in charge of each and with its collective functions was presumably evolved from pre-imperial days and was a general characteristic of big metropolitan cities described in the preceding chapter.

It may also be presumed that whenever the imperial Bureaucratic and democratic control control was withdrawn, the same machinery was continued under democratic direction. The later Smritis lay down high qualification,

viz, good lineage, knowledge of the Vedas, self-control, administrative acumen, purity of body and mind and freedom from avarice for the executive officers of the assembly who are called *śamuhahitavādīnāḥ* and *kāryacintakāḥ* (V<sub>1</sub> XVII 9, Yāj II 191) The power of appointing and of punishing them was exercised by the municipal body (V<sub>1</sub> XVII. 17-20) When not under the direct authority of a strong king, the autonomous or semi-independent municipality developed a police and military force of its own to defend against attacks either from within or from without, i.e., from robbers and rogues who must be repelled by all (V<sub>1</sub> XVII 5f, cf Nar III 4, X 5) Sometimes they became powerful enough to take the offensive, make marauding expeditions and harass kings (V<sub>1</sub>. XIV 31f., Arth V 3)

[Archæological evidence affords a glimpse into the other functions of the municipal body At Nasik, under Scythian rule, the terms of a royal endowment or of a private endowment with investment in a guild bank were publicly announced (*śravita*) in the town-hall (*nigamasabha*) and then duly registered (*nibaddha*) (Nasik Cave In 12 v, 15 viii).] The corporations had their seals and sometimes issued coins in their name Marshall discovered a seal-die of terra cotta at Bhita near Allahabad with the legend 'Sahajītiye nigamasa' assigned to the 3rd or 4th century B C on palaeographic grounds at the foundation of a house which he thinks to have been the office of the *nigama*<sup>1</sup> Four sealings bearing the legend 'nigama' or 'nigamaśa' in Kusanā characters have also been found there and a fifth with the legend 'nigamasya' in northern Gupta characters Similar seals have been discovered at Bīsarh (Vaiśālī) belonging to the time of Gupta emperors Four coins have been discovered

<sup>1</sup> Annual Report of Archaeological Survey, 1911-12, p 47

## CHAPTER III

### INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS      SPECIALISATION OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

India an industrial country   Industries in towns and villages   Dionysius  
 Mining and minerals   Mineralogy   Metal workers   The Blacksmith, his art  
 The Goldsmith, his art   Fees for metal workers  
 Animals and animal produce   Industries from animal produce   Ivory work  
 Fisheries  
 Perfumery   sandal   Textile industries   Textile luxuries   Toilets and other  
 luxuries   Miscellaneous crafts   Specialisation and division of labour  
 House building—the carpenter   his craft   the architect, the stone cutter, the  
 painter  
 The washerman and dyer   Other industries   Adaptability of Indian craftsmen  
 The Municipal market   State and municipal control  
 Mechanisation of industries   Mechanical devices and power

The long-standing notion that India has all along been  
 Agricultural country?   primarily an agricultural country was  
 dispelled many years ago by the scholarly  
 thesis of R. C. Dutt   It is now well-known that India was  
 the home of arts and crafts, that her specialised industries  
 found an appreciative market throughout the known ranges  
 of the globe, that she was rich in raw materials for industrial  
 production and that many of her finished goods would  
 compare favourably with her modern compeers in aesthetic  
 value

The towns no doubt favoured the concentration and  
 perfection of the industrial arts   But  
 Industries   urban   these had an almost equally important rôle  
 and rural   to play in rural and in national economy.  
 Literally every house was a centre of some small industry  
 And side by side with the agriculturist innumerable in-  
 dustrial professions cropped up in the countryside to cater

to the needs of the people and add to the total productive wealth of the nation.

Dionysius, the poet of "The Description of the Whole World," supposed to belong to the 3rd century A.D., gives a brief and beautiful glimpse into Indian industries from long-range perspective. "They (the Indians on the other side of the Indus) are variously occupied—some by mining seek for the matrix of gold, digging the soil with well-curved pickaxes; others ply the loom to weave textures of linen; others saw the tusks of elephants and varnish them to the brightness of silver; and others along the courses of mountain torrents search for precious stones—the green beryl, or the sparkling diamond, or the pale green translucent jasper, or the yellow stone or the pure topaz, or the sweet amethyst which with a milder glow imitate the hue of purple."

India had abundant mineral resources and her people knew full well to exploit the mines. In Mining and metals. the words of Diodorus; she "has also under ground numerous veins of all sorts of metals, for it contains much gold and silver, copper and iron in no small quantity, and even tin and other metals which are employed in making articles of use and ornament, as well as the implements and accoutrements of war" (II. 36).<sup>1</sup> Strabo, although he dismisses as a fable the story told by Timagenes that showers fall of drops of copper which are swept together, cites the more credible statement of Megasthenes "since the same is the case in Iberia, that rivers carry down gold dust, and that a part of this is paid by way of tribute to the king" (XV. i. 57). Similarly on the testimony of Gorgos, the miner, he believes in the existence of gold and silver mines in mountains but is misled to state that "the Indians being unacquainted with mining and the smelting of ores<sup>1</sup> do not know their own wealth,

<sup>1</sup> This is distinctly referred to as early as in the Rg-Veda, V. 9. 5; VI. 3. 4.

and therefore traffic with greater simplicity" (30) [In a Jātaka verse, a list of minerals includes iron (ayo), copper (loham), tin (tipu), lead (sisam), silver (rajatam) and gold (jatirūpan) (cf Dn XXIII 29)] The Arthashastra list of metals gives iron (kalayasa), copper (tamra), ? (vitta), bronze (kamsya), lead (sisā), tin (trapu), mercury (vaikintika) and brass (arakuta) (The Jātaka stories also testify that these mines, mostly under state monopoly, were worked by convict labour) (cf Arth IV 8)

The Arthashastra, in the chapter on Ākarakaimantapraṇatanam, evinces a great development in the science of mineralogy (sulbādhatu śāstra) Mines were discovered and exploited in plains and in mountain slopes (Large varieties of alloys, processes for extracting metals from ores, the chemical test of metallic substances on acid and alkaline matter are all treated in detail) That these were the acquisition of an earlier age from that of the author of the Arthashastra is evident from the simile in the Jātaka verse—"like verdigris removed by acid, —*ambilena paharitva tambamalam* (III 344), *ambuladhotam uya tambamalam* (V 95)<sup>1</sup> Drawing a more elaborate analogy, Buddha explains "When master Kassapa, that ball of iron, with its lambent and gaseous concomitants is burning and glowing with heat, then it is lighter, softer, more plastic, but when, without those lambent and gaseous concomitants, it is cool and quenched, it is then heavier, more rigid, less plastic" (Dn XXIII 17)

After the knowledge of metals and of their properties was acquired, (the smith's trade was divided and specialised on the basis of different metals. In a Milinda list of crafts in a town we

<sup>1</sup> Cf Buddaghosa's note on 'khura's pat kamp' i.e. powder prepared with  
 #1 (ika g n to prevent razors from rusting Cf V 107 4

have referencé to workers in gold, silver, lead, tin, copper, brass and iron separately (suvanṇakāra, sajjhakāra, sīsakāra, tipukāra, lobakāra, vattakāra, ayakāra). By far the commonest and most important from the point of view of village economy were the blacksmiths, the workers in iron and steel. They were generally grouped

The Blacksmith

in exclusive settlements of their own,<sup>1</sup>

and people came from the neighbouring villages to have razors, axes, ploughshares and goads made) (vāsi-pharasu-phāla-pācanādi, Jāt. III 281 ff). (A more elaborate list of their handicrafts gives razor, axe, spade, augur, hammer, instrument for cutting bamboos, iron weapon, grass-cutter, sword, iron staff, peg and three-pronged iron fork)(vāsi-pharasu-kuddāla-nikhādana-muṭṭhika-veḷugumbhacchedana-satthi-tinalāyana-asi-lohadanda-khanuka-ayasimghāṭaka, V. 45).

It is difficult from this distance of time to assess their workmanship at its true value. In the

Workmanship

Jātaka story just referred to (III. 281 ff), we are told about the exploits of a youthful prodigy. He “took iron of the best kind and made one delicate, strong needle which pierced dice and floated on water: then he made a sheath for it of the same kind and pierced dice with it.” Seven such sheaths were made enclosing one upon another, even the last capable of being mistaken as the needle. The strength of the needle is demonstrated by piercing an anvil with it and letting it float on water. We do not know what allowance is to be made for the Bodhisatta factor. The human element is left in the lurch by the pedagogic conclusion of the story: “How he made them is not to be told, for such work prospers through the greatness of Bodhisatta’s knowledge.”

<sup>1</sup> There was also the itinerant smith who carries his furnace wherever he is called to go—*kammārānam yatha ulld anto jhāyati no bahi*, Jāt VI. 189.

There are other evidences of the high excellence of the blacksmith's art which stand on more solid ground. For, it must be remembered that he not only supplied tools to the cultivator, the gardener, the carpenter, the wood cutter and the grass-mower, he also armed the military. It was on him that the king depended for victory in war. Megasthenes notices this twofold function of the smith (Diod. II. 41) and the protection given to this class by the Maurya state. They received subsidy from the royal exchequer and were exempted from paying taxes. Causing injury to their eye or hand (which disabled them to pursue their craft) meant death for the offender. The sedulous cultivation of the art of killing and of its implements led to the unique metallurgical development as reflected in the chapter on the Superintendent of Armouries in the Arthaśāstra (II 18), and in the great battle episodes of the Mahabhārata.

The goldsmith from the nature of his trade seems to have settled in the town where he could cater to the demands of fashion and luxury of the richer folk, and he is not found settled in exclusive villages like the blacksmith in the *kammāragāma* (Jat. V 424 com., Dn II 88, Mīl 331; Rām. II. 83 15; Mathura In. E I II 14). (His was a highly specialised art) The author of the Arthaśāstra contemplates a separate superintendent over the craft, treats gold and silver separately from other metals and deals with various fineries like ornamental work, setting jewels, thread-making, etc (II. 12 f) (The skilled smith executes an exquisite gold image to the order of a king) (Jat V 282) (He is seen refining gold from the bed of river Jambu in a crucible, working it to a brilliant polish so that, laid on a yellow cloth, it diffuses its sparkling radiance around) (nekkham jambonadam dikkhahammaraputta ukkamukhe sukusalasampabattham pandukambale nikkhattim bhasati ca tapati ca virocati ca, Mn 120, An I 181) The silversmith, blowing

off the filth from his metal, is also a common figure (Snt. 962; Dhṛ V. 239) Much of jewellery has survived and is amply represented in the bas-reliefs to show the shape and size of ornaments (cf. Rām I. 16; II. 9; III. 49, 51, 52, 54)

The Arthaśāstra specifies the fees for metal-workers.

Fees for metal working	They were required to manufacture gold and silver coins, 1 <i>māsa</i> <sup>1</sup> is the fee for the manufacture of a silver <i>dharana</i> , 1/8 portion for manufacture of a <i>sūarna</i> Fees rise according to the skill of the worker. Fees shall be 5 p.c. or 1/20 for manufacture of articles from copper, brass, <i>vaiṛntaka</i> and <i>ārakūta</i> . 1 and 2 <i>kahanis</i> are fees for manufacturing an article of a <i>pala</i> in weight of lead and iron respectively (IV I. Munich MS.) <sup>2</sup> ]
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The hills and forests of India were rich in animal resources sufficient to draw the attention of Megasthenes, and to provide materials for a complete treatise by Aelian. In the forests held under its monopoly, the state had a lucrative income from these products (In the primeval forests which were no man's property, the hunter and fowler plied their trade selling flesh for eating to the townsfolk or the hide, claws, teeth and fat when he happened to bag a lion) (Jat I 387; III 152). According to the Arthaśāstra, the skin (*carma*), bone (*asthi*), bile (*pitta*), gut (*snayu*), tooth (*danta*), horn (*srnga*), hoof (*khura*) and tail (*pucchā*) are useful commodities derived

<sup>1</sup> Of silver This means 1/16 of value, 1 *dharana* being 16 *maṣas* in weight

<sup>2</sup> The Sakraniti assigns the goldsmith 1/30, 1/60 or 1/120, according as the workmanship is excellent, mediocre or inferior 1/240 in the case of a bracelet (*kalaka*) and 1/40 for mere melting The grades of the silversmith are  $\frac{1}{2}$   $\frac{1}{4}$   $\frac{1}{8}$  according to quality of work and 1/16 in the case of a bracelet The fee is  $\frac{1}{2}$  for copper, zinc and *pasada* metal,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 1/2, or 8 times in case of iron (IV vv 603-59) Thus Sakra's law is more equitable giving more weight to workmanship and less to the value of the metal worked upon



from the lizard, the *seraka* (?), the leopard (*dwipi*), the porpoise (*sumsumara*), the lion, the tiger, the elephant, the buffalo, the yak (*camara*), the rhinoceros (? *sumrakharbga*) and the gayal (*gavaya*) as well as from other animals, birds and reptiles (II 17, 29)

The skin disposed of by the hunter went to the tanner and cobbler and fed their industry. The Industries wool and the feather, after the necessary processes of carding and cleaning, were used by the skilled weaver for the production of warm clothing. But the more important trade flourishing upon animal produce was that of the ivory-carver. He could carve out any shape out of ivory as the potter out of clay or the goldsmith out of gold (Dn II 88). (The material yielded into diverse forms and shapes as for example bangles and trinkets (*valayadini*, Jat I 320 f, II 197), and "a living elephant's tusk was worth a great deal more than a dead one's" (Jat I 320 f, cf Arth II 2). In the *Atthasalinī* these artisans are sketched as "tightly swathed in one garment, their heads covered with another, their limbs besprinkled with ivory dust, making various forms out of ivory," so that a king riding his elephant in state "being pleased with their skill, might say, 'how clever are these masters who can do such things'" and even wish he might be one of them (135).

Fishing was probably confined to the rivers and lakes and the depths of the sea seem not to have been explored by the northerners to a very appreciable extent. (A casual simile in the *Jatakas* of course refers to the throwing of a net in the sea (*samudda-matthake jalam khipanto viya*, III 345), but in the *Jatakas* a river is often indiscriminately spoken of as a *samudda*) (I. 227 ff, IV 167 f, VI 158). In the *Sāntiparva*, going into the depth of the ocean is among the *varittas* (*samudram va viśantyanye*, 167 33). The treasures (*ratana*) beneath

the ocean are enumerated as *mukta* (pearl), *mani* (crystal), *velunya* (beryl), *sankha* (shell), *sila* (quartz), *parala* (coral), *rajata* (silver), *jatarupa* (gold), *lohitaṅka* (ruby) and *masara galla* (cat's eye) (An IV 199). Pearl-fishery was a flourishing industry in Ceylon and in the Tamil countries. Writing about it, Pliny says that like bees swarms of oysters were led by clever and fitting ones. If they are netted, others are easily caught. "They are then put into earthen pots where they are buried deep in salt. By this process the flesh is all eaten away, and the hard concretions, which are the pearls, drop down to the bottom" (IX 55). The tortoise shell which figures in the *Periplus* (17) as an important export from India may be a southern product and so also the beaded pearls of Sita's head tiara which are claimed to have been raised from the sea (*barisambhava*, Ram V 40 8).

✓ (Perfumery was a highly specialised art (Jat VI 335)

#### Perfumery

The commonest perfume was sandal. The wood was rubbed into a paste, or oil was extracted out of it which was used along with aloe (*akalu*) as toilet (II 181, III 160, 512, V 156, 302, VI 144). There were several varieties among which *gośirsa*, red sandal and that produced in Dardūra are enumerated in the *Kalpasutra* (100, cf Arth II 11). Flower-scents were extracted and used to perfume crude sesamum oil (*Mbh* VII 279 14 f, 299 14). Many other varieties of aromatics were cultivated and gathered which figure prominently in the *Periplus* and classical writers among the exports of India to the Roman world. Chemical compounds of different scents were also known (*sabbasambhāraka*, Jat VI 336) and the art embraced the knowledge of embalming and preserving dead bodies (Ram VII 88 2-4). Despite the attempt to stigmatise his profession in certain quarters as appropriate to mixed castes (*Mbh* XIII 23 48).

(the perfumer's (*gandhika*) art had a good demand among the rich and fashionable people and consequently commanded respectability) (Jat VI 336, Ram II 83 12ff Mathura In, Karle Cave In)

The habits of luxury equally encouraged the textile industries. Megasthenes observes that the main attention of the fashionable was in dress and the medallions and relief sculptures in Barhut, Sanchi, Sunath and Amaravati amply bear out his observation. The Jain *Acarangasutta* mentions several varieties of cotton and fur stuff (II 5 1 4 f). The *Mahavagga* enumerates among textile goods *khomam* (linen), *lappasilam* (cotton), *koseyyam* (silk), *kambalam* (woollen garments), *sanam* (hemp) and *bhangam* (hempen cloth) (I 30 4). A further elaboration is made upon these, viz., *sanam*, *sanasuttam* and *saniyo*, i.e., hemp, hempen thread and hempen cloth, *lhomam* and *lhomasuttam*, i.e., flax and linen thread, *kappasikadussam* and *lappasikasuttam*, i.e., cotton cloth and cotton thread (Dn XXIII 29). That spinning and weaving were separate industries is evident from the *Milinda* (331) and the *Ramayana* (II 83 12 ff) lists of crafts and professions (An III 295). The texture of these was sometimes so fine that the down on the gourd was coarse in comparison ( *civarani dhuemi dalhani yathā lukhani alabulomasani* Mn 77).

Silk was of course the commonest luxury. Carpets were made of the finest fibre cloth (*varipotha lattharianam*, Jat VI 280) or with soft variegated squirrel skins (*muducitfakalandaka*, Jat VI). Of blankets and woollen stuff there were many varieties, e.g., dyed or embroidered blankets (*citraṁ kambalan*) (Ram II 70 19) and those spotted with lac dye (IV 28 24). In a long list of luxury goods to which the Brahmanas are addicted, have been enumerated the *gonako* (rendered by Rhys Davids as goat's hair coverlets with very long fleece),

*cittaka* (patchwork counterpanes of many colours), *patikā* (white blankets), *patalika* (woollen coverlets embroidered with flowers), *tulikā* (quilts stuffed with cotton wool), *vikatikā* (coverlets embroidered with figures of lions, tigers, etc), *uddaloma* (rugs with fur on both sides), *elantaloma* (rugs with fur on one side), *katthissam* (coverlets embroidered with gems), *koseyyam* (silk coverlets), *luttalam* (carpets long enough for sixteen dancers), *hatthattharam* (elephant housings), *assattharam* (horse rugs), *vatthattharam* (carriage rugs), *ajinappakenim*, *ladalumigapavarapaccatthana* (panther or antelope skins), *sauttaracchadam ubhato lohita-kūpadhānam* (couches covered with canopies or with crimson cushions at both ends) (Dn I 15, cf XVII 11 5, Mv V, 10 13)<sup>1</sup> Blankets were made also of human hair (*kesakambalam*),<sup>2</sup> of horse's tail (*valakambalam*)<sup>3</sup> and of feather of owl (*ulumapakkham*) (Dn VIII 14, XXV 8, Mn 12, An I 181, 286) Blankets, fibrous garments and cotton fabrics with their specialities and sources of supply figure in the Arthashastra as well known industrial products (II 11) Megasthenes observed that Indians put on robes worked with gold and precious stones, and flowered garments of the finest muslin (Str XV 1 53 56)

Among other articles of luxury were "high and huge couches," e.g., the *asandā* (moveable settees, high and six feet long)<sup>4</sup> and the *pallankā* (divans with animal figures carved on the supports) (Dn I 15, An I 181, Mv V 10 3, Jat I 108), *couches* of ivory, wood, gold or silver (Sn III 146), mirrors, eye-

<sup>1</sup> See Sumangalavilasini on Brahmaśāstra 9 and the translations of Rhys Davids

<sup>2</sup> See Sumangalavilasini Cf. Astoleśambala Cf. Manu VI 93

<sup>3</sup> Rhys Davids Dialogues p 31, fn 3

<sup>4</sup> It is there (Sat Br III 30 103) said to be of common sorts of wood and perforated which probably means that the frame was of wood and the seat was of interlaced cane or wickerwork ibid p 11 fn 4

ointments, garlands, rouge, cosmetics, bracelets, necklaces, walking sticks, reed cases for drugs, rapiers, sunshades, embroidered slippers, turbans, diadems, whisks of yak's tail and long-fringed white robes (Dn. I. i. 55; An. I. 181). "They wear shoes made of white leather, and these are elaborately trimmed, while the soles are variegated....." (Arrian, 16).

Lac was widely cultivated and a flourishing industry thrived upon it. It was used mainly as a dye and for anointing their feet by women (Therag. 459). Apiary or bee-culture was well-known (Arth. II. 15; Rām. V. 61-63). The classical writers also give prominence to a host of edible spices, herbs, medicines, stones, dyes, resinous gums, etc., as peculiar Indian products which had a monopoly of Arabian and Roman markets (cf. Mv. VI. 1 ff.).

~ (How far division of labour and specialisation in industry was achieved is shown by the splitting off of the art of arrow-making from the smithy. A fletcher (usukāra) straightening or bending his arrow is a very common reference (Dhp. 33, 80; Mbh. XII. 178. 12). He heats an arrow in a pan of coal, wets it with sour rice-gruel and closing one eye, looks with the other while he makes the arrow straight) (usukāro angāarakapalle usum tāpetvā kañjikenā temetvā ekam akkhiṃ nimilitvā eken'olokento ujum kāroti, Jāt. VI. 66). (From the Milinda list of crafts practising in a town it would appear that the art of arrow-making, while being separate from that of the smith (cundā) was separate even from the manufacture of bows (dhanukāra) and of bow-strings (jiyakāra) apart from any ornamental work thereupon.)

The same was the case with carpentry. While the art or the *radḍhaki* covered all woodcraft in general, the *tacchaka* (planer) and the *bhamakāra* (turner) specialised in modes of woodwork (Mv. I. 56, 396; Dhp. 80).

(The Pali literature throws much light on the craft of the *vaddhaka*. The Jātakas have an illuminating passage about a settlement off Benares) “They would go up the river in a vessel, and enter the forest, where they would shape beams and plans for house-building, and put together the framework of one-storey or two storey houses, numbering all the pieces from the main post onwards, these then they brought down to the river bank, and put them all aboard, then rowing downstream again, they would build houses to order as it was required of them, after which when they received their wage, they went back again for more materials for the building, and in this way they made their livelihood” (II. 18).

Te nāvāya upariṣotam gantva araññe gehasambhāradarūṇi kottetvā tatth’eva ekabhūmika-dvibhūmikadibhede gehe sajjetva thambhato patthāya sabbadārūsu saññam katvā nadītiram netva nāvam aropetvā anusotena nagaram agantva ye yadisāṇi gebhīṇi akamkhanti tesam tadisāṇi katva kabāpane gahetva puna tatth’eva gantva gehasambhāre āharanti. Evam tesam jīvikaṃ kappentānam

(The passage gives valuable clues to the condition of the industry. Wood was plenty and it was used on a large scale for house-building.<sup>1</sup> The carpenters who are in this

<sup>1</sup> There is little doubt that during the period of our study timber was largely used for constructions in the Gangetic provinces (Jat III 167, 317 IV 153 159 Mv III 8). It was used to build the palaces and fortifications of Pataliputra, although the Arthashastra disapproves of such use as fire finds a happy abode in wood. Conditions may have been different farther west for the Milindapanho composed by a western writer, says that in the eastern districts (pūvattimesu) houses were built of combustible material like bamboo and wood and were dangerous in case of fire (pp 43, 47 224), and citing thereby that the western countries used other and non combustible materials. In this respect the distinction between towns and villages should be noted. The village huts were built chiefly with wattle (kaṭṭha), withies (valla), grass (tina) and clay (mattika) Mn 28, Mil 43, Mbb XII 261 7) but the application of brick, stone and cement along with wood is testified to (Cv V 11 6, 14 3, 16 2, 17 2, VI 3 31, 10, 17 1). Arrian draws the distinction that cities on river banks or sea-coasts “being meant to last for a time” mainly consisted of woodworks, while those on “commanding

case a firm of building contractors resided in proximity to the sources of their raw materials i.e., to forests. At the same time they must be within easy reach of the town where they have to receive and execute orders and the river afforded the most convenient facility for transport. Accordingly the settlement was made on a river bank, midway between a town and a forest. They brought wood from the forest worked the pieces at home and carrying them downstream fitted them in the place required.

Besides houses the carpenters took contracts for bedstead (manam) chair (pitham) etc. i.e. furnitures in general (Jat IV 159). A Brahman carpenter

His craft

gained his livelihood by bringing wood from the forest and making carts (IV 207). (Chariot making and ship building came within the purview of his trade and called for considerable skill in wood craft. He is seen plying his trade with hatchet adze, chisel, and mallet (visipharasunikhadanamuggate) and the measuring line (kalasutta) (Jat II 405 IV) 344) which he draws out at length or winds up short (On XVII 2) or which he puts round a log of wood with black dust to guide his saw (tacchako kalasuttam anulometva rukkham tacchati, Mil 413). He bends a log of wood (darun namayanti tacchakati, Dh 145) and discarding soft parts of the wood takes the hard parts (pheggum apahariva saram adiyati, Mil, 413) as obviously in the case of ebony of which the outside is soft and inside hard.

(The carpenter was not the only agency engaged in house building. The building of a king's palace was the venue of as many as eighteen manual arts (Jat VI 427). Among them the foremost place was that of the architect<sup>1</sup> who is skilled in divining

The architect

structures were built of brick and mud. The remembrance of the former practice survives now in Burma which is still rich in forests and timber.

For the workmanship of the architect see p. 411.

good sites (vatthuvijjācariyo, II 297, IV 324) and who is sometimes "endued with great intelligence and well-versed in the knowledge of laying foundations) a *suta* by caste, well-acquainted with the Puranas,"—

sthapatir buddhisampanno vastuvidyāviśāradaḥ  
ityabravit sutradhārah sutaḥ paurāṇikastada

—Mbh I 51 15

(The stone-cutter was his accomplice (pāsānakottaka), an expert in quarrying and shaping stone (pāsāne uppātetvā kotteti) and capable of hollowing a cavity in a crystal (Jat I 478 f). Innumerable archeological finds testify to the growth of his craft. He made flights of steps leading up into a house and laid foundations for the woodwork of which the upper part was built. He carved pillars and bas reliefs. He faced a tank with stone-lining and equipped it with steps and balustrade (Cv V 17 2, Rudradāman's Junagadh Rock Ins.). And he did finer work such as making a crystal bowl or a stone coffer, excellent specimens of which have been discovered in the Sakiya tope, and chiselling exquisite works of sculpture on *topes* and temples.

✶ To the work of the architect, carpenter and stone-cutter, the painter (*cittakara*) gave the finishing touch. The clay and woodwork of houses was covered with fine *cunam* plaster on which the painter painted frescoes) (Cv VI 17. 1, Sum 42, 84, Vin II. 151, IV. 47, 61, 298, Ml 331). But the painter's like the sculptor's art was not the handmaid of architecture because of the facts that the chisel and the brush had a free berth in frescoes and mural decorations and that accordingly they are treated in the Śilpśāstras in subsidiary sections of the Sthāpatya-veda. Painting flourished as a finished and independent art. A passing reference in the Mrcchakatika, Act I, gives a glimpse of the painter at work. "I who used



to sit in the inner courtyard and was fed on highly favoured sweets with a hundred pans around me, like a painter surrounded with paint-pans, from each of which I touched a bit and pushed back ...". About the working in his mind with the outer operations, the Attasalinī speaks in greater detail, "In painting, the painter's masterpiece (carana)<sup>1</sup> is more artistic than the rest of the pictures. An artistic design occurs to the painter of masterpieces—that such and such pictures should be drawn in such and such a way. Through this artistic design there arise operations of the mind (or artistic operation) accomplishing such things as sketching the outline, putting on the paint, touching up and embellishing. Then in the picture known as the masterpiece is effected a certain central artistic figure. Then the remaining portion of the picture is completed by the work of planning in mind as, 'above this figure let this be, underneath, this; on both sides, this.' Thus all classes of arts in this world specific or generic are achieved by the mind. And owing to its capacity thus to produce a variety or diversity of effects in action, the mind, which achieves all these arts is itself artistic like the arts themselves. Nay, it is even more artistic than the art itself, because the latter cannot execute every design perfectly. For that reason the Blessed One has said 'Bhikkhus, have you seen a masterpiece of painting?' 'Yea Lord.' 'Bhikkhus, that masterpiece of art is designed by the mind. Indeed, Bhikkhus, the mind is even more artistic than that masterpiece.'<sup>2</sup>

(The dyer and washerman (rajaka) was probably the same person but different from the dye-manufacturer) (rangakāra) (Mil 331, Dn. II. 14; Mn 56, Ram II. 83-15, Manu, IV. 216).  
 He knew how to remove the dirt of a cloth without destroy-

<sup>1</sup> Vicaragacittau, —com Sn III 151. A show piece selected for exhibition by an itinerant artist

<sup>2</sup> Cf Sn III 151

ing the dye (Mbh. XIII. 91. 2) He gave the dye of blue, yellow, red or saffron (mañjettā) to a piece of cloth after cleansing it properly (Mn 7, An III. 230) Regarding his terms of business, the Arthaśāstra lays down that he shall be fined 12 *panas* for selling, mortgaging and letting out for hire others' clothes. Clothes merely to be cleaned are to be returned within 1 to 4 nights, clothes which are to be given thin colouring (tanuragam) 5 nights; those which are to be made blue 6 nights, those which are to be made as red as flower, lac or saffron or those which require much skill and care 7 nights (puṣpa-lāksā-mañjisthā-raktam guruparikāma-yatnopacāryam iatyam vāsah sapta-rātrikam) Otherwise charges will be forfeited (IV 1 Munich MS)

Among other specialised crafts were those of the florist or garland-maker (mālākāra, Du. II 11, Mn, 56, Jāt. III. 405, Mil 331), of the manufacturer of sugar and sugar-candy (Str. XV 1. 37), of the oil-presser (tailika, tilāpisaka, Manu IV 84 f; Mbh XII 174 25, XIII 90, Nāsik Cave In 15. vii), of the salt-maker (lonakāra, Mn. 56, 128, Jāt. III 489), of the curry-maker and provision-vendor (odanikā, III, 49; ālarikā sūda, Mil 331, bhojanadatr, Arth IV 8) (making a luscious display of his stuff) (nānāggarasanam dibbabbhojananam bhājanani puretvā odanikāpanam pasāretva, Jāt I 397), and of the tailor (tunnavaṇṇa, Jāt VI 366, Mil 331) who used a thumb or finger-protector (patiggaho) when sewing) (Cv V. 11. 5) (Among the poorer crafts were those of the woodcutter (kattabharakā, Mil 331, Str. XV. 1 50) and the grasscutter (tinābhāraka, Mil. p. 331) who works with sickle (asitam), ties the bundles with a rope (tinā-bandhanarajum) to a pole (kājan) and sells them in the city) (Jāt. III 129) Thera Kappatakura who in his young days supported himself going about clad in rags, pan in hand, seeking for rice grains (kura), when grown up maintained

himself by selling grass which he reaped in the forest (Paramatthadīpani on Pss 199 ff)

Strabo speaks disparagingly not only about the mining activities of the Indians, but also about <sup>Adaptability of</sup> <sup>craftsmen</sup> their industrial propensities in general "They do not pursue accurate knowledge in any line, except that of medicine, in the case of some arts, it is even accounted vicious to carry their study far, the art of war, for instance" Presumably his authority derived the information from the priestly denunciation of all manual pursuits For elsewhere he himself quotes Nearchus speaking of the remarkable adaptability of native craftsmen They saw sponges used by the Macedonians for the first time and immediately manufactured imitations of them with fine thread and wool dying them with the same colour They quickly picked up other Greek articles such as scrapers and oil flasks used by athletes For writing letters they used species of fine closely woven tissue A study of the plastic arts amply bear out that the Indians had their own designs and ideals, but these did not stand in their way of quickly mastering foreign ideas that commended

(Among urban crafts the Milinda and the Ramāyaṇa <sup>The city bazar</sup> lists include jewellers (maṇikārā), rope makers (rajjukara), comb-makers (koṭṭha kara); arms-makers (sastropajivinaḥ), makers of fancy-fans from peacock feathers (māyurakāḥ), those living on *krakacas* (krakacikah), borers of pearls, etc (vedhakāḥ), *rocalah* (?) and nector-makers (sudhākarah) (cf Ram III. 90). Brewery and distillery, pottery, wicker-work and leather-work<sup>1</sup> complete the general picture of industrial economy The town bazar presenting an imposing array of flower shop (pupphāṇam), perfumery (gandhapanam), fruit

<sup>1</sup> These industries are treated in more detail in Bk V Ch III and Bk VI, Ch IV

shop (phalapanam), pharmacy of antidotes (agadāpanam), medical stores (osadhāpanam), stores of ambrosia (amatāpanam), jewellery (ratanāpanam) and stores of all other sundry merchandise (sabbapānam) (Mil 332) was the general sight in all cities and not in the Indus Valley alone. In the Maurya state it was necessary to employ civil officers to superintend the occupations of artisans like wood-cutters, carpenters, blacksmiths and miners. Of the six

State and Municipal control

bodies of the municipal board of Pāṭaliputra, the very first "look after everything

relating to the industrial arts" (Str XV 1 50) Competition, unfair dealings, deceitful practices against customers, smuggling and cornering, evasion of state revenues and municipal tithes, all these evils of a thriving industrial life demanded interference of the state as far as it could extend its hand. The Arthaśāstra, the great exponent of this school, makes a clean sweep of laissez-faire practices and seeks to inaugurate a rigorous state control to which even Friedrich List offers no parallel.

How far Industry was mechanised is a difficult problem for study. There is little evidence of the

Mechanisation :

use of power like those of air, water or electricity, if the stories of flying vehicles and miraculous arms in the Epics are dismissed as legendary. It cannot be ascertained what sort of engine (yantra) was fitted in the boat which Vidura built to help the Pandavas escape from the lac house (Mbh I. 143 5) (Nor can the mythical element be sifted out from the feats of a Bodhisatta mechanic who builds a house with "eighty great doors and sixty-four small doors which all by the pressure of one peg closed, and by the pressure of one peg opened", and with "some hundreds of lamp-cells also fitted with machinery, so that when one was opened all opened—and when one was shut all were shut") (Jat VI 432). But there is little doubt about a considerable progress in mechanical devices, applied

to various industries, as for example, evinced in the chapter on Armoury Superintendent in the Arthaśāstra (II 18). The commentaries on the art of mechanical engineering (mahāyantrapravartana) in Manu (XI 64)<sup>1</sup> are informative in this respect. They go severally as "constructing dams across rivers in order to stop the water" (Medh, Gov. and Kull), "making machines for killing great animals such as boars" (Nar) or "making great machines such as sugar-mills" (Nandana).

From these explanatory notes and copious other evidences it appears that mechanical contrivances were called for by the great irrigation projects undertaken to combat flood and drought, by armaments and techniques of warfare and by machines like the sugarcane-presser (Jāt. I. 339, II 240),<sup>2</sup> the oil-presser (Mbh XII 174 25; Manu IV 84 f), the water-pump or hydraulic engine (odhyantra, Nasik Cave In 15 vii) and the loom with its shuttle and wheel and spokes (Cv. V. 28 2; Mbh. I 3 111). The devices of a double water-strainer and fitter (Com on 'dāndaparissāvanam' and 'ottharakam', Cv V. 13 3) and of a door with poles turning about on a socket (V 14. 3, VI 3 7) were common things. The fictions of Nala bridging the sea between the Cape and Ceylon and of Maya raising a picturesque town on the site of a forest cannot be altogether divested of reality. The great monoliths of the Maurya epoch estimated at about 50 tons each and their transport and erection at such

<sup>1</sup> This craft and the supernatural force of mines and factories are bracketed low. It seems that mechanisation and heavy industries were deprecated by the orthodox and priestly class then as now. A *śrutaka* is not to accept or sent from an oil presser and an oil press is as bad as ten slaughter houses (Manu IV 81 f). Of course very few handicrafts were exempt from stigma. See *infra*, Bk VI Ch. IV.

<sup>2</sup> It may be noted that the Indians knew the preparation of sugar-candy which was foreign to the Greeks and appeared like 'stones dug up which are of the colour of frankincense and sweeter than fig or honey' (Str. IV, 1 37).

distant places as Topra near Umbala, Sanchi in Bhopal and the Nepalese Terai are no mean engineering feats. If the lion capital of Sarnath is a testimony to Maurya craftsmanship these are standing monuments of mechanical development.

## CHAPTER IV

### INDUSTRIAL GEOGRAPHY

Geographical distribution of industries

Animals Horse—northwest Elephant, ivory—east Skins—north, north west

Food crops Herbs, roots and gums malabathrum spikenard, nard, costus lycium, bdellium Aromatics sandal aloe

Dyes Grape wine—Afghanistan

Minerals Gold—three varieties, ant gold Tibetan mines Other centres Silver Copper Other metals Rock salt—Ormenus Range Damanī Precious stones—south

Pearl fishery—south Sea fishing—south

Textile industry—Benares, Bengal, other centres Cotton Wool Silk

Tabulated list of industries and sources of supply

Many of the natural and industrial products described in the preceding chapter were scattered over all parts of the country. But some were specialities of particular localities from where they were distributed to others.

The forests and mountains abounded with wild animals and birds. The horse and the elephant were prize animals in great demand with kings and nobles. The best breed of these were not to be found everywhere. Of the former, the *Arthasāstra* ascribes the best to Kamboja,<sup>1</sup> Sindhu, Āratia<sup>2</sup> and Vanayu;<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Stein places it in eastern Afghanistan (*Raj I* p. 136), some farther north identifying with Pamir Badakshan (Pt. Jaychand Narang *Vijayalankar Bharatiya Itihāsa ki Ruparekha* pp. 470 ff). Raychaudhuri, on the basis of *Mbh.* VII 4 5 identifies it with Rāspura or Rajaori (between the Jhelum and the Chenab)—*Political History*, p. 120 f. The latter is strengthened by the appearance of the synonymous *adunct nadiya* and by the use of *jalaja* or herbs of water for trapping horses.

<sup>2</sup> See fn. 1, next page.

<sup>3</sup> Suggested conjecturally (a) to be Arabia both being famous for horses, (b) to be Van or Uraia from philological similarity but Van was never noted for its horse (c) placed in the N.W. Frontier by the *Padmapurana* (*Svarga Adh. Ch. III*).

the middlings to Balhika,<sup>1</sup> Papeya,<sup>2</sup> Sauvna,<sup>3</sup> Taitala,<sup>4</sup> the rest being ordinary (II 30) In the Jatakas and in the Mahabharata, the Sind variety comes foremost (Jat I 178, 181, II 166, III 338, Dhṛ 322, Mbh VI 91 3 f, VII 43 2) along with the Kambojas or those of the river country (Jat IV 464, Kambojaka jalajen eva assam, V 445, Mbh VII 36 36, VIII 38 13, XII 36 14, Kambojanām nadījanam, VI 91 3 f) Āratta (Mbh VI 91 3 f) and Vanaya (VI 36 36, VIII 38 13) also figure as famous sources of supply the latter of the white coloured breed Balhika appears (VII 36 36) in the list as well as Mahi<sup>5</sup> and Pūvatīya<sup>6</sup> (VI 91 3 f VII 36 36) and the trans Himalayan region around Lake Manasa where Arjuna obtained as tribute during his *digvijaya* many of the species called *tittiri* and *lalmasanmanduka* (II 28 6) In general the source for pedigree steeds was the north-western regions including Sind, the Punjab, the North-West Frontier and Afghanistan The north west has been traditionally associated with this trade, the horse dealers from Uttara-patha<sup>7</sup> bring their animals for sale to Benares (Jat II 31 287), horses of various species are among the tributes brought to Arjuna by the northern monarchs (Mbh 28

<sup>1</sup> Identified by Lassen with Balki or Bactra But references in the Mahabharata assign it to the Punjab as synonymous with Madras Aratta and Jartikas On this basis (and Mbh VIII 44) it is placed west of the Ravi the Madra city of Sakala being located there

<sup>2</sup> Papa? There are two Papas or Pāvas one in Gorakhpur the city of the Mallas and another in Bihar

<sup>3</sup> Northern Gujarat

<sup>4</sup> Taitala is Kalunga according to Monier Williams

<sup>5</sup> Is it river Mahi north of the river Narmada—the Moḥis of Ptolemy and Mas of the Periplus? There is another river Mahi, tributary of the Ganges in Saran district one of the five rivers frequently enumerated in Buddhist literature

<sup>6</sup> This seems to be Ptolemy's Parautoi (17 3) and Parsyetai (12 3) and on his reference is placed in the west and middle of Paropanisadae or southern and eastern sides of the Hindukush Have the Asvakas which is the Aspasoi of Alexander's historians through the Iranian form Aspa (=horse) located in the hill country north of the Kabul anything to do with its supply of horses?

<sup>7</sup> It included the Punjab Kashmir the N.W. Frontier and part of Afghanistan



16 f), and this is among the chief articles of merchandise coming to the plains along the trade routes from the Himalayas (Arth VII 12)¹

As for elephants, the Arthashastra says that those of the *Kalinga*, *Anga*, *Karusa*² and *Prācya* are best, of *Dasarna* and western countries of middle quality of *Surastra*³ and *Pañcājanya* of low quality (I 2). In the Kuru war men of Anga are found specialised in elephantry (Mbh VIII 22 18) and the battle episodes have many references to the effect that *Pragjyotiṣa* of Bengal (or Assam⁴) was rich in elephant (VI 100 13, VII 26) of a quality unequalled in the Kuru and Pandava armies. So, as the best stallion came from the west, the best elephant was supplied from the east, from the forests of Orissa, Bhagalpur and Bengal while those of the great *Dandakā* forest, i.e., in the south east of the *Vindhya*s, of further west and of Gujarat were comparatively inferior.

The settlements near about these forests must have supplied ivory and specialised in ivory works. According to the *Periplus* "the region of *Dosarena* yields the ivory known as *Dosarenic*" (62). It may not be wild to conjecture the origin of the name *Dantapura*,⁵ the capital of *Kalinga* to the same flourishing industry. Ivory workers are seen pursuing a

prosperous trade in Benares (Jāt. I. 320 f.; II. 197), in Ayodhyā (Rām. II. 83. 12 ff.), in Vedisā (Bhilsa—Sanchi In.) and in the Tamil countries (Peri. 56) obviously with materials imported from the above-mentioned sources.<sup>1</sup>

The sources for horses listed above appear also as sources of animal skins. The varieties given in the Arthaśāstra (II. 11) are mostly assigned by the commentator to the Himalayan borders and skins, are among the wares purveying in the plains from the Himalayan route (VII. 12). Arjuna obtained skins during his promenade in north Harivarṣa (Mbh. II. 28. 16). The northern Kirātas brought this as tribute to the Kuru king among other Himalayan products (II. 52 10 f.). Deer-skins and skins of Ranku deer were presented to Yudhiṣṭhira by the king of Kamboja (II. 49. 19) and by the Bālīkas (II. 51. 26), i.e., from the Punjab.

About the distribution of food-crops information is meagre. In the Periplus, Abīria (Ābhīra in Gujarat) is a fertile country yielding wheat and rice, sesame oil and clarified butter (41). This is confirmed by the further reference to these as the major articles of export from Barygaza, the seaport nearest to the Ābhīras (14, 31, 32). But there is abundant evidence that wheat and rice and many other cereals were grown over almost any part of the country.<sup>2</sup>

References to sugarcane come mostly from the Madhyadeśa through which flows the river Ikṣumatī or Oxymagis, i.e., the United Provinces or the Ganges doab which, according to the report of 1931 produced 51·7 p.c. of the total cane crop of India.

<sup>1</sup> This craft is now practically confined to Mysore Travancore, Delhi and Murshidabad follow in order.

<sup>2</sup> See Bl. I. Ch VIII

In the classical works, India has been noted as the chief producer of aromatic or medicinal herbs, roots and resinous gums. Prominent among this group are nard which "holds the first place among unguents" (Pliny, XII. 26); costus, an aromatic root; myrrh, another medicinal and aromatic gum; cardamum, a medicinal herb; spikenard, a fragrant herb made into oil or ointment; macir, the red bark of a large root used for medicine (Pliny, XII. 16); pepper, ginger and malabathrum used as condiments.

According to Ptolemy, the best malabathrum or cassia leaf is produced in Kirrhadia (2. 16), a town near the eastern coast of Bengal.<sup>1</sup> It was brought down to the port of Tāmralipti for export (Peri. 63). An interesting study is given how the Besatae, a Tibeto-Burman tribe of the Himalayas, transacted in silent trade in their malabathrum with the people of This (China) (65). It was grown also in the interior of the Tamil countries reaching the ports of Tyndis, Muziris and Nelcynda for export outside (56).

Spikenard is generally discovered in the same regions, i.e., in the north-west and the north-east as well as in Malabar (56).<sup>2</sup> In order of its source its varieties are termed Caspapyrene (i.e., of Kaśyapapura),<sup>3</sup> Paropanisene (of Paropanisada or the Hindukush) and Kabolitic (of Kabul) (48). According to Strabo, the land of Gedrosia (southern Beluchistan) produced aromatic plants, particularly spikenard and myrrh which Alexander's army used for tent roofs and beds (XV. ii. 3). On the other hand the famous Gangetic spikenard

<sup>1</sup> Lassen places it between Chittagong and the mouth of the Arakan river,—Ind Ant., III, pp 235-37. Malabathrum (tejpat) is now obtained in Sylhet, Assam, Kangpur and the valleys of the Himalayas.

<sup>2</sup> Malabar is now the chief source of edible spices.

<sup>3</sup> Stein identifies this with Kashmir, Cunningham with Multan.

came from the Himalayas to the ports of Tāmralipti and of the far south (56, 63).

Costus, lycium, nard and bdellium were exported from the port of Barbaricum at the mouth of the Indus (39). This, Sind or regions farther north, may be the "upper country" from where costus and bdellium were carried through Ozene to Barygaza (48). Nard grew abundantly in the country of Gedrosia (Arr. Anab. VI. 22).

The distribution of medicinal and aromatic plants cannot be properly studied from the classical authors alone who wrote with knowledge of the seaports serving as outlets of these wares and with partial ignorance of the interior. The indigenous literature which are more reliable on this point scarcely go into details and when they do, it is difficult to identify Indian names with foreign. There are notices on

scents in general terms. The Jaina Kalpasutra refers to scents of Turushka or

Turkestan (100). In the Kuru war the fighters from Andhra are said to be used to rub powdered scents on their body (Mbh. VIII. 12. 16). About sandal there is more detailed information. The Arthaśāstra observes several varieties all

of which, according to the commentary, are specialties of Kāmarūpa or Assam

barring only a few, viz., the Aśokagrāmika which belongs to Ceylon, the Dāyasabheya which is of a city and subjacent hill in Western India producing the lotus-scented (padma-gandhi) species and the Kāleyaka which is the product of Svarnabhūmi<sup>1</sup> (II. 11). Philostratos of Lemnos, biographer of Appollonius of Tyana (cir. 172 A.D.), writes that on the banks of the Hyphasis (Beas) "grew the trees from which unguent was procured with which bride and bridegroom were anointed, that Venus might be propitious to their nuptials." Another primary source was the

<sup>1</sup> Svarnabhūmi is Burma or Sumatra. See *infra*, Bk III. Ch. V

**Malaya hills** A verse in the Rājamīghaṇṭu, an Ayurvedic work, says that the sandal produced in Beṭṭa mountain near the Malaya hill is called Beṭṭa. This is obviously Mount Bettigo of Ptolemy (I 22) which is the southern portion of the Western Ghats. This sandal of the Malaya hills and the sandal and aloe of the Dardara hills<sup>1</sup> were exploited by the Cholas and the Pandyas (Mbh II 52 33 ff).

Sandal, aloe, and other perfumes were produced by the people of the Bengal coast called the Mlecchha tribes (Mbh II 30 27), in the land of Benares (kṣīkacandana It V 302, An I 145, Mh 348), in Bubricum of the lower Indus (barbarika—Dharmantariya Nighantu, Rājamīghaṇṭu), the variety which is white and scentless and among the Kiratas of the north-western Himalayan slopes (Mbh II 52 10 f) who recall the Kirhadrū of Ptolemy. It reached down to Barygaza to be shipped to the ports of the Persian Gulf (Peri 36)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf Kalpasūtra 10. Pargter suggests it to be the Nilgiris.

<sup>2</sup> The list envisages a wide distribution of *candana* besides in Mysore and Malabar where sandalwood is now confined. The soil and climate of these latter are naturally fitted for the growth and in former times these had all other places as appears from several evidences (bha malayam anvatra candanap na vivardite—Amarskosa Itaghu IV 51 Pañcatantra I 4<sup>th</sup> Kāvyaśūrāṃsa the Tamil epic Cilappatikaram). The earlier growth of *candana* in other places than the one which in the botanists' opinion do not offer the requisite geological and climatic environments may be explained by either of two circumstances: firstly soil conditions may have changed or proper attempts may not have been made in these days to cultivate sandal in those places; secondly *candana* may not be quite coterminous with sandal proper. It undoubtedly implied scented varieties absolutely unrelated to the *Santalum Album* as the Mysore sandal is called for which the Indian term is *patacandana*. The *rahtacandana* and *līcandana* are completely different species and are now grown in many places. It is not improbable that several scented woods went under the general name of *candana* the meaning of which was narrowed down culminating in course of time in the *Santalum Album* Linn.

There is another possibility. Some of the places mentioned, particularly Assam and the land of the Kiratas may have been the route along which sandal came to India from China.

For the discussion whether *Santalum Album* was an indigenous plant or an exotic one naturalised in India from the Timor islands see C. E. C. Lischer. Where did the Sandalwood Tree Evolve? Jour. Bom. Nat. Hist. Soc. Vol. XL No. 8.

Of plants made into dyes there were many. Those like  
Dyes.
lac and *kusumbha* flower were common  
articles over India. So probably was  
indigo (Pliny, XXXIII. 4), which was exported outside  
from Barbaricum (Peri. 39).

Varieties of spirituous liquor are mentioned, *e.g.*, the  
*soma* juice, the *vāruṇi*, etc. But the best perhaps was the  
grape wine from the vines of Kapisā (Afghanistan) (Pānini,  
IV. 2. 99; Arth. II. 25).

Among metals, gold is the most common occurrence.  
Gold
Herodotus writes, "There is abundance of  
gold there, partly dug, partly brought  
down by the rivers, and partly seized by the manner I have  
described" (III. 106). The first is the gold obtained from  
mines. The second is alluvial gold or gold dust carried  
down by certain rivers presumably from their bed or from  
their rocky source. The third category, the *ant-gold*  
celebrated by all classical writers from Herodotus to Pliny  
and noticed in the Mahābhārata was in fact nothing but  
mine gold. About this Strabo gives the following account :

"Among the Dardai, a great tribe of Indians, who  
Ant gold.
inhabit the mountains on the eastern  
borders, there is an elevated plateau  
about 3,000 stadia in circuit. Beneath the surface there  
are mines of gold, and here accordingly are found the ants  
which dig for that metal. They are not inferior in size to  
wild foxes. They run with amazing speed, and live by the  
produce of the chase. The time when they dig is winter.<sup>1</sup>  
They throw up heaps of earth as moles do at the mouth of  
the mines. The gold dust has to be subjected to a little  
boiling. The people of the neighbourhood, coming secretly

<sup>1</sup> "The miners of Thek Jalung . . . prefer working in winter..... as the  
frozen soil there stands well and is not likely to trouble them much by falling in"  
J.R.A.S., Vol. 39, pp 149 f

with beasts of burden carry this off. If they come openly the ants would attack them and pursue them if they fled, and would destroy both them and their cattle. So, to effect the robbery without being observed, they lay down in several different places pieces of the flesh of wild beasts, and when the ants are by this device dispersed, they carry off the gold dust. Thus they sell to any trader they meet with while it is still in the state of ore, for the art of fusing metals is unknown to them" (XV. 1. 44).

Arrian quotes Nearchos having seen many skins of these animals in the Macedonian Camp (15; cf. Pliny, VI, XI 31). These mythic ants, equipped with horns, "not inferior in size to wild foxes," gifted with "amazing speed" and living upon chase, capable of destroying men and their cattle have not been satisfactorily identified. The most plausible theory advanced so far is that the whole is a confused and mythic version of the mining operation of the Tibetans who dug in winter, whose ferocious black-and-tan coloured mastiffs guarded dwellings and mines as even now and whose pickaxes were grafted by hearsay as horns on the animals.<sup>1</sup> Whatever the identity of these ants it cannot be doubted that there were gold mines in

Tibetan and Himalayan plateau

Dardistan or the Tibetan highlands or farther west in the Himalayan tracts

During the sacrifice of Rājasūya the people of Meru and Mandara,<sup>2</sup> i.e., of modern Garhwal, brought to Yudhisṭhira heaps of gold measured in jars and

<sup>1</sup> See Indian Antiquary, Vol. IV pp. 225 ff. where arguments are adduced to prove that "the gold digging ants were originally neither, as the ancients supposed, real ants nor as so many eminent men of learning have supposed, larger animals mistaken for ants on account of their appearance or subterranean habits, but Tibetan miners whose mode of life and dress was in the remotest antiquity what they are at the present day." — McCrindle: *Megasthenes*

<sup>2</sup> Mandara is in Bhagalpur district, 35 miles south of Bhagalpur (Mbh. XIII 17. III. 102. 104). But Meru, the "mountain of Gold" of the Purāṇas stood at the centre of the trans-Himalayan tract of Ilāvṛta, i.e., in Garhwal, in whose neighbourhood must have been another Mandara.

raised from underneath the earth by ants (pīṇikām nāma uddhrtam yat pīṇikāṁ) The Kīrātas of the north-western Himalayas brought along with other articles of tribute gold of great splendour procured from the mountains (Mbh. II. 52 10 f) Because of the reputation of this gold along the upper courses of the Indus among the westerners, the Indus has been supposed to be one of the four rivers of Paradise in the Book of Genesis, viz., the Pishon, "which compasseth the whole land of Havilah where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good."<sup>1</sup>

There were other sources of the metal The author of the Periplus heard that there were gold mines near Tīmrāpti or Tamruk and that there was a gold coin called *caltis* (63). Schoff suggests that this might have been the gold of the Chotanagpur plateau, 75-150 miles west to the mouth of the Ganges.<sup>2</sup> Rivers like the Son (from *svarna* or *suvarna*) known as Erannoboas or Hīranyavahā,<sup>3</sup> carried alluvial gold in considerable quantities The so-called Mleccha tribes of Bengal brought gold as tribute to Yudhisthira (Mbh. II. 30 27). Further east was the island (or land) of Suvarṇabhūmi and Suvarṇadvīpa identified with Burma or preferably with Sumatra,<sup>4</sup> owing its name to its gold mines (suvarṇa-rūpakadvīpam suvarṇakaramanditam, Rām. IV. 40. 30).<sup>5</sup> Pliny states that extensive gold mines were operated on the

<sup>1</sup> Havilah is identified with Manasa sarovara

<sup>2</sup> Where many old workings along with the outcrops of the veins have been discovered

<sup>3</sup> The Son is referred to as Hīranyavaha in Bana's Harṣacaritam

<sup>4</sup> The alternative Suvarṇadvīpa is a strong support for Sumatra (cf. Yavabhūmi and Yavadvīpa for Java) which has always been noted for its abundance of gold In popular parlance the name however went for the East Indian islands including Burma and Malay See R C Majumdar *Suvarṇadvīpa*

<sup>5</sup> Pliny is more sceptic "Beyond the mouth of the Indus are Cīrys and Argyre (identified by Yule with Burma and Arakan) rich, as I believe in metals For I cannot readily believe, what is asserted by some writers that their soil is impregnated with gold and silver (VI)



other side of Mount Capitalia (Abu) (VI).<sup>1</sup> The heavy tribute paid in 360 talents of gold dust annually by the Indian satrapy of the Persian Empire, i.e., the country west of the Indus (Herodotus, III. 97) may have been obtained from the northern mountains or from some local centre. But gold was far more plentiful in the south than in the north (Arth VII. 12). Pliny mentions gold on the Malabar coast obviously coming from the mines of Mysore.<sup>2</sup> And "from Megasthenes we learn that Taprobane is more productive of gold than India itself" (VI. 22).

To some of these sources silver is attributed along with gold. As "gold is very abundant among the Dardae" so is "silver among the Setae" (Sāta or Sātaka near the Dāradas) (Pliny, VI). In Pliny's work silver mine is spotted along with gold near Abu.<sup>3</sup> According to Ptolemy Ceylon had mines of gold, silver and other metals (I. 1). The Bengal tribes brought silver as well as gold to the Pandavas. In Greek Arakan went as the silver country.<sup>4</sup> Sugrīva's search party in the east came across the land of silver mines (bhūmīṇa rajatākaram, Rām IV. 10. 23)<sup>5</sup> and farther east the island of Rūpakadwīpa, thus strongly refuting the scepticism of Pliny whether there were gold or silver mines in far eastern regions.

<sup>1</sup> On this authority, Cunningham places Pliny's Oraturae south of this region, on the Gulf of Cambay and identifies it with Sophir or Ophir of the Bible from where the Tyrian navy carried away gold and precious stones in the days of Solomon. For other identifications of Sophir or Ophir, see *supra*, pp. 175 f.

<sup>2</sup> The quartz reefs of Kolar are now the source of 98 p.c. of India's total gold supply.

<sup>3</sup> The only silver mines now known in India.

<sup>4</sup> Probably a transliteration of an ancient Burmese name for Arakan. "There are no silver mines in Arakan and considering the geological structure of the country, it is almost certain there never were any." V. Ball. Presidential Address to the Royal Geological Society of Ireland, Mar 19 1883.

<sup>5</sup> The northern Shan States of Upper Burma now supply much of India's silver requirement.

On the whole silver seems to have been a much rarer metal than gold. In Indian and foreign literature, particularly in Pali works, reference to it is far less common than to the latter.<sup>1</sup> The sources of other metals of lesser value are referred to even less frequently for obvious reasons. They were not worth bringing as precious tributes to propitiate conquering monarchs nor would they interest foreigners concerned with trade transactions or whose primary source of knowledge was trade relation. In using our authorities these underlying motives which detract from their completeness should always be borne in mind.

The *Periplus* notices copper among the exports from Barygaza (36). The source is not known. The metal is not extensively worked at present. But formerly it was smelted in large quantities in South India, Rajputana and at various parts of the outer Himalayas where a Killas-like rock persists along the whole range and is known to be copper-bearing in Kulu, Garhwal, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan.<sup>2</sup> Schoff supposes that this might also be European copper of the Parthian Empire re-shipped to the West.

There were rocks yielding salt. "There are mountains also formed of native salt as, for instance Ormenus in India where it is cut out like blocks from a quarry and is continually reproduced, whence a greater revenue accrues to the sovereign of the country than they derive from gold and pearls" (Pliny, XXXI. 7). "In the territory of the Soperthes there is a mountain

<sup>1</sup> Mrs Rhys Davids - J. R. A. S., 1901

<sup>2</sup> Watt *Commercial Products of India*, p 401. Remains of old excavation and exhausted mines are found in several places near about Darjeeling and Jainti, in Bargunda, Manbhum and the Santhal Parganas, in Singhbhum where the deposits are said to have been exploited by the Serahs or lay Jains about or before the Christian era, in Tamkhan of the Indore state, in Harpat Nag of Kashmir, in Nellore of Madras, in the Narnul district of Patiala and in Rajputana, Sikkim, etc

livelihood to the Pāndya chief<sup>1</sup> (Nagpur Stone In. of the Mālava rulers, 1104-5 A D.).<sup>1</sup> "The southern ocean full of rolling waves, the shores of which were shining with the multitude of rays of numerous pearls dropped from shells struck and broken by the trunks of excited elephants resembling whales. ... " (Kendur Pl. of Kirtivarman II, Saka Sam 672).<sup>2</sup> All the varieties of pearl mentioned in the Arthasāstra are specialties of Pāndya and Kerala countries and of Ceylon (II 11; VII. 12) In the Periplus, Ceylon on the one shore (61) and Colchi (Kolkai) of the Pandya kingdom and Argara (Urayūr) of the Chola figure as centres of pearl-fishing<sup>3</sup> Ptolemy mentions pearl fishery in the Kolkhic Gulf (I. 10), i.e., in the Gulf of Manar in south Tinnevely. Pliny quotes Megasthenes to the effect that Taprobane produced pearls of greater size than India (VI. 22).

In the north

The north also gave pearls though of

inferior quality and smaller size The northern centre was the Bengal coast from where the *mleccha* tribes paid to Bhīma tributes of gems, pearls (*manimauktika*) and valuable corals (*vidrumaṇca mṛhadhanam*, Mbh II 30 27) That pearls were fished near about the port of Tāmralipta and gathered there for export is also affirmed in the Periplus (63). Pliny ascribes the trade also to Perimula (VI 54) placed in the western coast somewhere near Bombay or in Simylla.

Apart from pearls, sea-fishing was the main occupation of the Ceylonese. "All their energy is devoted to catching fish and the monsters of the deep; for the sea encircling the island is reported to

Sea fishing

<sup>1</sup> E I II 13

<sup>2</sup> P I IX 28

<sup>3</sup> In the south pearl fishing seems to have been a state monopoly The Periplus says that Colchi was worked by condemned criminals and regarding Argara, "at this place and nowhere else are brought the pearls gathered on the coast thereabouts The Nagpur Inscription is also a pointer See *supra*, fn 1

breed an incredible number of fish....." (Aśhian, 16. 2. 22). Ceylon and the Tamil countries made use of tortoise-shell (Peri. 61, 56) as well as other shells (śamṣkṁ, Arth. VII. 2) which they supplied to the north and abroad to the West.<sup>1</sup>

In textile industry, the north was leading against the south (Arth. VII. 12). The choicest stuff were of Benares and Bengal. The fine muslin of Kāsi (kāśikasucivattha, kāśikāni vatthāni) is a common reference (Jāt IV. 352, V. 377, VI. 47, 144; Mil. 1). A familiar simile is the Benares muslin of delicate finish on both sides, blue (or yellow, or red or white) in colour, blue (or yellow, etc.) in appearance, and reflecting blue (or yellow, etc.) (vattham Bārāṇaseyya-kam ubbatobhāgavimaṭṭham nīlam nīlavaṇṇam nīlanidassanam nīlanibhāsam, Dn. XIV. iii. 29; XXIII. iii. 1; Mn. 77, An. V. 61 f.). It is pleasant to handle (sukhasamphassam), of great worth (mahaggham), of good colour (vaṇṇavantam) and a treasure to be laid up in a scented casket (An. I. 248). Kāsi is in the list of places which produce the best quality of cotton fabrics (Arth. II. 11, Sn. V. 45). According to the commentator of the Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta, the texture was so fine that it absorbed no oil and hence was used to cover the body of the deceased Buddha. There were extensive cotton fields in the neighbourhood from which the yarn was spun (Jāt. III. 286). The silk-fabric of Benares still carries this reputation.

The Bengal spinners and weavers produced muslins of the finest sort called Gangetic which were brought down to Tāmralipti for export (Peri. 63), the traditions of which were maintained by the famous muslins of Dacca, Santipur and Farashdanga down

<sup>1</sup> Northern traders voyaging from Barygaza brought tortoise shell also from Socotra.

to the advent of British traders. In the Arthaśāstra list, Vanga (Eastern Bengal) was the source of cotton fabrics and blankets. Pundra (Northern Bengal) and Suvarnakudya<sup>1</sup> supplied blankets and fibrous garments (patronāh); the latter were obtained also in Magadha (II. 11). Among the presents received by Bhīma from the *mlecchas* on the coast of Bengal were fine cloths and blankets (cāruvastāni, kambalam, Mbh. II. 30. 27). Sericulture was known somewhere near about, for the eastern party sent from Kiṣkindhya came across the land of worms yielding silk thread (bhūmiṃca kosakārānām, Rām. IV. 40. 23)<sup>2</sup>

The north was another source, chiefly of woollen clothes.<sup>3</sup>

The north Wool As a source of blankets, the Arthaśāstra mentions Nepal (II. 11; Manu, III. 234 f.) and the Himalayan regions in general (VII. 12). The king of Kamboja sent to Yudhisthira as tribute blankets of finest texture along with deer skins (Mbh. II. 49. 19) including those of sheep's wool, fur of mice and other animals living in holes and of the hair of cats all inlaid with threads of gold —

aunān valān vārsadamśān jātārūpaparikṛtān  
prāvārajīnamukhyāṃśca kāmbojah pradadan bahūn.

51. 3.

The Ballukas presented numerous blankets of woollen texture manufactured in Cina,<sup>4</sup> numerous skins of Ranku deer and clothes prepared from jute and others from the threads of insects :

pramāna-rāga-sparśādyan bāibhīcināsamudbhavam  
aurmaṇca rānkavaṇcaiva patijam kītajantathā

51. 26.

<sup>1</sup> o

<sup>2</sup> Is it Assam? Attempts have been made to identify this with China

<sup>3</sup> The Punjab, Kashmir and Tibeto-Himalayan ranges still carry the tradition

<sup>4</sup> This is not China proper but Tibeto-Mongoloïd races, or people vaguely acknowledging Chinese suzerainty in the north-west

In north Harivarṣa Arjuna obtained finest clothes and silks (28. 16). The cloth produced in the Sivi country,<sup>1</sup> of which the choicest suit of king Pajjota of Avanti was made (Mv. VIII. 29), was a known luxury favoured in the palace.<sup>2</sup>

The Arthasāstra list is completed with Madhurā (of the south),<sup>3</sup> Aparānta (Konkana),<sup>4</sup> Kalinga, Vatsa (city of Kauśāmbī)<sup>5</sup> and Mahīśa (Māhiśmatī)<sup>6</sup> for the best stuff of cotton fabrics. Of these Aparānta and Māhiśmatī are corroborated in the Periplus which deals with the same countries while speaking of Barygaza, Ozene and Abiria. From Barygaza were shipped westward, mallow cloth, yarn, silk cloth and cotton cloth, the broad type called *monache*<sup>1</sup> and that called *sagmatogene*<sup>2</sup> (6, 14, 31, 32, 49). Ujjainī was one of the centres of production of these textiles transported to Barygaza (48). In Abiria, a very fertile country, cotton was extensively cultivated and cloth made therefrom of coarser sort (41). But a sheep-rearing, pastoral people as they were (41), the Ābhīras produced blankets of better stuff of which they brought various kinds as present to king Yudhiṣṭhira. Cotton cloth and silk yarn were exported also from Barbaricum (39), probably the produce brought down from the north.

<sup>1</sup> From the testimony of Fa hien and Huen Tsang who makes the (Su ho-to) the scene of the classic story of king Uśinara giving his flesh to save his fugitive pigeon, it would appear to be in Gandhāra or Swat valley<sup>2</sup> (Deal's Records, p 206). But from the Sibipura in Shorkot Inscription Vogel places it in Shorkot in Jhang district below the junction of the Jhelum and the Chenab. It may be the Sihoo of Strabo (Ibse Diod, Sobu Curtius) and Sivapura of Panini said to belong to the northern country. Cunningham places it in Lower Beas in Jullundur district. A branch of the Sibis migrated to Mewar where they had their capital Jetuttara (Vessantara Jāt.; Jattaraur, Alberuni : India, I, p 302).

<sup>2</sup> *Sreyyāham dussayugam* Buddhagloṣa gives two explanations of which the latter, more plausible, is "a cloth woven from yarn which skilful women of the Sivi country spin"

<sup>3</sup> Commentary.

<sup>4</sup> Mīnākṣī ?

<sup>5</sup> ?

Madhurā of the Arthasāstra is also confirmed. The silk cloth of the Tamil ports of Nyleynda, Tyndis and Muziris were inland produce (56). Muslin, mallow cloth and much ordinary cloth were carried from Tagara to Barygaza (51). The Cholas and the Pandyas brought to the Pandavas fine cloth inlaid with gold (Mbh II. 52. 33 ff.).

\* \* \*

The countries and their specialised commodities so far as they may be ascertained from the above may be arranged thus in tabular order —

COMMODITY	COUNTRY	
	(Ancient names)	(Modern equivalents)
<b>ANIMALS</b>		
1 H rae	Sindhu, Kamboja, Iratta, Larayu, Balhika, Samira Lake Manasa, Parvatya.	Sind, Punjab, N W F P, N Gujarat, Mansarovar, S P of Hindukush
2 Elephant	Pragyotisa, Karusa, Inga, Kalinga, Dasaripa, Surashtra	Bengal, Bhagalpur, Orissa, S E. of Vindhya, Kathiawad
<b>ANIMAL PRODUCTS</b>		
3 Ivory	Dasaripa, Dantapira, Kasi, Ayodhya, Vidisha, Tamil countries	S E Vindhya, Danton (Midnapore ?), Benares, Oudh, Bilasa, Mysore
4 Skins	Himalayan borders, N. Hara, Varsha, Na Kurata, bo a, Balhika	N W. of Himalayas, Hindukush, Punjab
<b>FOOD CROPS</b>		
5 Rice, Wheat, Sesame, Herbs, Roots, Gums	Abhira	Coast of S Gujarat
6 Malabathrum	Kirchadis, Desatae, Tamil	Rangpur (?), Tibeto-Burma, Tamil countries
7 Spikenard	Kashyapa, Parjanisadat, Kabul, Gedrosia, Pn Himalayas	Kashmir, Hindukush, Kabul, S Beluchistan, En Himalayas
8 Myrrh	Gedrosia	S Beluchistan
9 Nard	Gedrosia, N. of Barbaricum	S Beluchistan, Sind (?)
10 Costus, Lycium, Bdellium.	N. of Barbaricum and of Ozene	Sind and regions farther north (?)
<b>TEXTILES</b>		
11. Scoria	Turusha, Andhra	Turkestan, Andhra
12. Satal	Adamaripa, Bengal, at Navarathlun, Kasi, Hyphosis, Na Kurata, Dava, estia Akkagrama, Malaya & Darisra Hills.	Islam, Bengal, Sumatra, Benares, the Deas N W of Himalayas, Ceylon, Mysore

COMMODITY	COUNTRY	
	(Ancient names)	(Modern equivalents)
<b>PERFUMES</b>		
13 Aloe	Bengal coast, N of Kiratas, Dardara Hills	Bengal, N W of Himalayas, Nilgiris
<b>DYE</b>		
14 Indigo	N of Barbaricum	Sind ( ? )
<b>WINE</b>		
15 Grape wine	Kapisa	Afghanistan
<b>MINERALS</b>		
16 Gold	Dardar, Meru, Mandara, North ern Kiratas Upper Indus, Havilah, near Lamralipti, Erannoboss, Sivargabhumi E of Mt Capitalia, Malabar, Taprobane	Tibet, Garhwah, N W. of Himalayas and Hindu Kush, Chotanagpur ( ? ), the Son, Sumatra, Rajputana, Malabar, Ceylon
17 Silver	Sutae, E of Mt Capitalia, Bengal, Rupakadwipa, Ceylon	Tibet, Rajputana, Chotanagpur ( ? ), Sumatra, Ceylon
18 Copper	(exported from) Barygaza	S India Rajputana, Himalayan range
19 Rock salt	Mt Ormenus, Sindhu	Range between Jhelum and Indus
20 Diamond	Vidarbha, Kośala, Kaśi, Kalunga, Sabarai, Tamil	Benar, Oudh, Benares, Orissa, Sambhalpur ( ? ), Tamil
21 Stones	Akesines and Ganges, N of Himalayas, Strirajya, Vindhya, Ozene, Paethana Malaya, Tamil, Ceylon	Chenab and Ganges, Garhwah and Himalayas, Vindhya and Satpura, W n Ghats, Ceylon
<b>FISHERY</b>		
22 Pearl	Panilya, Taprobane, Bengal coast, Simylla	S E coast of Tamil, Ceylon, Bengal coast
23 Coral	Bengal coast	Bengal coast
24 Sea fishing, tortoise and other shell	Tamil, Ceylon	Tamil, Ceylon
<b>TEXTILES</b>		
25 Cotton cloth	Sin: Ka'i, Vanga, Fundra, Magadha, Kalunga, Vatsa, Aparanta, Mahismati Abhir, Madhura, Chola, Papdya	Shorhot, Benares, E & N Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Maharastra, Tamil
26 Blankets	Vanga, Fundra Nepal, N W Himalayas, Kamboja, Balhika, Abhira	E t N Bengal, Nepal, N W, Himalayas Punjab, Balikh ( ? ), Maharastra
27 Silk	Silk land of East, Balhika, N Harivarsha, Tamil	Assam ( ? ), Balikh ( ? ), N Himalayas Tamil
28 Jute and fibrous cloth.	Punira, Magadha, Balhika	N Bengal, Bihar, Balikh ( ? )



The list is no doubt incomplete, defective and lacking valid confirmation in many cases. There were innumerable thriving industries outside this small range which cannot be localised for lack of materials. The compilation, tentatively made from vague and scrappy literary notices may not be correct in every detail. But the facts of localisation and specialisation stand out; and for certain industries at least, *e.g.*, the muslin of Bengal, the pearls of Pāndya and Ceylon, the sandal of Mysore and Assam, the gold of Tibet, Garhwal, Malabar and Ceylon and the fleet-footed horse of Sind and the Punjab, evidences are almost unimpeachable. The catalogues of the Arthaśāstra and the Sabhapatiya alone, from which many items have been omitted in this chapter, give the modern economist ample food for thought over the magnitude of lost arts and industries exhausted mines and forests, exterminated flora and fauna and defertilised agricultural land.

## CHAPTER V

### ORGANISATION OF INDUSTRIES

Guild organisation    *Śreni* and *puga*    Origin of combination    Stages    Vedic, Pāṇini and Epic

Organisational structure (a) Localisation of industries    Theory, practice—in town or village    (b) Leadership    the *pamulika* the *jettihala*    (c) Heredity of occupation    Exceptions the *antevasi*—rules    (d) Guild laws    evolution    regulation of investments and dividends, of contracts, sanction against delinquency    judicial power

Finances    The balance sheet    Public works

Relation with civil power    Paternal care    Arbitration of disputes    the *bhanika garika*    Guardianship?    The guild militia a thorn

The organised crafts

Functions and powers    Flag    Coins    Seal    Control of Municipal power    Receiver of deposits and executor of endowments    Mobility    Cultural life    Independent development    Disintegration

Tools and mechanical power are not the sole means for the production of wealth. It requires organisation, combination and laws regulating business. The progress of Indian arts and crafts depended in no small degree on the organisational genius of the people. The industrial combines in ancient India have generally been termed 'guilds' as they bear a close resemblance to those prototypes of mediaeval Europe.

Sanskrit works use many words with references to local bodies, the distinction between which is not precisely defined. Generally, however, the terms *śrenī* and *pūga* go for industrial and commercial guilds.<sup>1</sup> Kaṭyāyana and Tattvabodhinī explain *śrenī* in Pāṇini (II 1 59) as an assembly of persons following a common craft or trading in a common commodity (*ekena śilpena panyena vā ye jīvanti tesam samuhah śrenī*). The com-

<sup>1</sup> And sometimes *gama*, *nigama*, *gana*, *saṅgha*, *saṁuha*, *saṁiti*, etc.

mentators on Manu (VIII. 41) and Nārada (I. 7) explain it nearly in the same sense, but in the Arthaśāstra, *śrenī* is either a guild of workmen (II. 4) or a military clan (VII. 16) or communities like those of Kāmbojas, Surāstras and Ksatriyas who subsist by agriculture, trade and military service. So the *pūga* is a craft or trade guild according to the commentators of Narada (X. 2) and Yājñavalkya (II. 31). But both Vīramitrodaya and Mitākṣarā distinguish it from the *śrutī* as an association of persons of different castes and occupations while *śrenī* is a more limited assembly of people of same craft or occupation though possibly of different castes.

As Vrhaspati points out, anarchy and insecurity in business were the earliest impulse to combination (XVII. 5 f.). The danger came not only from the conditions of the market but also from the severity of the civil law in regard to certain crafts.<sup>1</sup> In fact guild life is the characteristic of an advanced stage of economic progress when "the individual mechanics, artisans or traders have sufficient business instincts developed in them, and have achieved sufficient success in their several businesses to appreciate the necessity of organising themselves into a community for the purpose of promoting their individual and collective interests"<sup>2</sup> The idea of organising on co-operative basis was inherent in the division of castes and allocation of functions. The Vaiśyas were called *ganasya* in distinction from the Brāhmanas and Ksatriyas as co-operation was necessary for acquiring wealth (Br. Up. 1 4. 12 and Sankara's Com). Within the Vaiśya or commoner caste the emergence of traders as a distinct body

<sup>1</sup> Eg, the laws of the Arthaśāstra on gold and silversmiths Cf Manu—"But the king shall cause a goldsmith who behaves dishonestly, the most noxious of all thorns, to be cut to pieces with razors" IX 232 In Vṛṣṇa guilds of metal workers and of smiths of gold and silver are pre eminent

<sup>2</sup> R. K Mukherji: *Local Self government in Ancient India*

from agriculture and cattle-rearing signifies a further stage in this progress.

The plea of Geldner and of Roth for the existence of guilds in Vedic literature has been keenly disputed. But the words *śreṣṭhin* and *śraīṣṭhya* used in Vedic texts<sup>1</sup> would appear from their contexts to mean 'headman of a guild' and 'his position of primacy.' For more positive evidence of institutional growth we have to look to a much later age. "As the Buddhists placed the warrior-caste before the priest-caste and gave unrestricted freedom to the third estate, it is not wonderful that guild-life is characteristic of a Buddhistic environment."<sup>2</sup> Early Pali literature is full of references to guilds and heads of guilds are of the highest social position. They are great householders always represented in the social set of kings and princes. References in the Epics and in subsequent records, epigraphic and literary, are equally informative. In the *Sāntiparva* it is fully realised that the *gana* when united, acquires great wealth by the strength and prowess of its constituents (*arthaścaivā'dhigamyante samghātabalapauruṣaih*, 107. 15).

In the origin and consolidation of guilds four important factors had their part. It has already been seen that certain industries were specialised at certain places. Within the same district or town again each industry tended to be localised at a particular area of its own. The *Arthaśāstra* ordains that merchants trading with scents, garlands, grains, and liquids (*gandha-mālya-dhānya-rasapanyāḥ*) are to settle in the eastern quarter of a town. Traders in cooked rice, liquor and flesh (*pakkānnasurāmāmsapanyāḥ*) and prostitutes

*Localisation of industries : in theory.*

<sup>1</sup> For references see Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*.

<sup>2</sup> Washburn Hopkins • *India Old and New*, p 171.

(rupajivah) to the south Artisans manufacturing worsted threads cotton threads, bamboo mats, skins, armours, weapons and gloves and the Sudras to the west (urnasutra venucarmavarmasastravaiana karavah) Smiths and workers in precious stones (lohramanil varavah) find place with the tutelary deity and Brahmanas in the north (II 4) The Agnipurana makes a totally different allocation except for the prostitutes and for the religious people The goldsmiths are to be in the south west corner of the town the professional dancers and musicians and the harlots in the south the stage managers the carriage-men and fishermen in the south west Those who deal in cars and chariots, weapons and cutlery in the west liquor merchants, officers and employees in the north west religious people in the north fruit vendors in the north east This is in the outermost circle In the inner blocks are the military the civilians and the *elite* of the town The Mayamata gives a more complicated plan To the south—a little to the sides should be the weavers to the north wheelwrights or carters (cakramam) The outermost sites are divided into several blocks reserved for (a) fish meat dry food and vegetables (b) staple food, (c) basins and pottery, (d) brass and bronze, (e) cloth shops, (f) rice and paddy, (g) tailoring salt and oils (h) perfumeries and flowers all serially arranged intervening residential sites Along the roads within the boulevard are assigned stalls of jewels and precious stones, gold, clothes drugs and condiments like *manjistha* pepper, pipal, ginger, honey, ghee, oil medicines etc In ports or in trade marts stalls are not to be inter residential but more compact, set up in continuous rows on either sides of the highway, to secure economic efficiency (Ch 10, II 154-83) In a different order of planning artisans and manual workers are placed in the outermost zone of the city, to the east or north—potters barbers and other craftsmen to the north west—fishermen to the west—butchers, to the north—

oilmen, to the south-east or north-west—architects; further off—washermen, one *kīasa* (2 miles) off from the east—sweepers (Chs 9, 29).

Plans differed in theory and in practice. But there is no doubt that industries and occupations tended to be segregated from one another partly under the same circumstances which lead to the localisation of modern industries. In the towns of the Madhyadeśa we come across the ivory-workers' street (*dantakaravīthim* in Benares, Jat I. 320 f, II 197), the lotus street (*uppalavīthim* in Savatthi, II. 321), the washermen's street (*rajkavīthim*, IV 82), the street of the Vessas (*vessānam vithiyā*, VI 485), the weavers' quarter (*tantavita-tatthanam*, I 356, *pesakāravīthi*, Dhpa I 424) and a street in the caterers' quarters (*odonikagharavīthiyam*, III 49). As in the town people with the same industrial pursuit flocked in a specified street or quarter, in the countryside, they congregated in the same village settlement and formed a more developed organisation. A carpenter's village with 500 or 1,000 families is often seen in the frontier of the state of Kāśi or in the outskirts of the city of Benares (*kaśīratthe paccantagame bahū vaddhakī vasantī*, I. 247, *kulasabassanivāso mahāvaddhakīgamo*, IV. 159, II 18, 405, IV 207). There was a weavers' village near Benares under a headman (Dhammapala's Com on Therīg, Pss. 157 ff.) and a smith's village of 1,000 houses (*sabassakutiko kammaragamo*, III 281) is also referred to. Brāhmanas formed similar villages for their scholastic and religious activities (VI. 514, Mn 41, 150)<sup>1</sup>. The craftsmen purveyed their goods to the people of neighbouring towns and villages or executed orders from them jointly or severally (Vr XVII 11).

<sup>1</sup> For villages of fishermen, hunters, thieves, *cinḍilas*, *ccenas*, *nala aras* etc. see *infra*, Bk V Ch III, Bk VI, Ch III.

After localisation the next factor was leadership. The localised industry, the *gāma* or the *seni* was frequently organised under a leader called *jettthaka*. We hear of *jettthakas* of carpenters, smiths, weavers, garlandmakers (III. 405) as well as of other inferior crafts and of mariners, thieves, caravan-guards, etc. Fick surmises that his office was hereditary and honorary, based on skill rather than on age. He is prominent in royal court (III. 281, V. 282) and rich and of great substance (III. 281). He seems to have combined the functions of the village headman, the village syndic and the president of the local guild.

The third factor was heredity of occupation. From the frequent use of the suffixes *kula* and *putta* after a craft name, it would appear that a family stuck to the same craft the father handing down to his son his capital, credit and accumulated experience. Later, during the period of the later law-books (Manu, etc.), with the development of trade transactions "the significance and inner compactness deepened, and being similar to the castes on account of the traditional organisation and the hereditariness of membership, they gradually got....., as certain rules and customs with reference to marriage and interdining were developed, the appearance of real caste, till they finally became the modern trading classes."<sup>1</sup>

But occupation was not always rigidly determined by heredity or caste. This is proved by the copious literary references particularly in the Pali canon to the master and the pupil, the *ācariya* and the *antecāsi* in an establishment where the latter undergoes a course of apprenticeship under the former in an art which he chooses to pursue in future.

<sup>1</sup> Fick *Die Sociale Gliederung*, p. 179

His rôle is not always that of a learner,—for sometimes he excels his master in skill (Jāt. V. 290 ff.). It is very often that of an assistant or a servant akin to the worst conditions of wage labour.<sup>1</sup>

From Nārada's rule it seems that the period of apprenticeship was very similar to the condition of bondage. A youngman desirous of learning a trade was free to do so. He lived with a master, worked for him and was fed and taught by him (also Vṛ. XVI. 6). Like a slave by his master he should be treated as a son.<sup>2</sup> He might not be made to do any other work than the one he was learning. The master might compel the apprentice's return if he ran away. In case the apprentice learns the craft more quickly than stipulated in the contract, the time left over shall be his master's and all the profit derived from the apprentice during that period shall accrue to his master (also Yaj. 11. 187). It follows that he was bound down for a given length of time and that the advantage from his work was wholly his master's. If agreed upon in advance he might be rewarded with a fee on attaining proficiency, but he should continue to work for his master till the stated time was up (V. 1c-21).

The last and the strongest factor binding the constituencies as a close homogeneous unit was the operation of the guild laws. The evolution of these laws may be traced back roughly to the first six centuries before the Christian era in the form of conventions taking shape. The tendency is indicated in two rules of Gautama. "Laws of districts,

<sup>1</sup> In fact Nārada treats them in the same chapter along with hired servants and slaves.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mv I 32 1, where Buddha says that the *ācariya* ought to consider the *anērasiḥa* as a son, the *anērasiḥa* should consider the *ācariya* as a father. He exhorts the *thikkus* to live the first ten years in dependence on the *ācariya*. Of course the rule relates to education in sacred lore and not in a craft.



castes and families, when not opposed to sacred texts, are an authority", and "ploughmen, merchants, herdsmen, money lenders and artisans (are also authority) for their respective classes (XI 20 f, Vās I 17, XIX 7) While Gautama is an advocate of local usage and law of caste, Manu reckons guild laws as on par with those of castes and localities. A king should settle the laws only after a careful examination of the laws of castes, districts, guilds (*srenī*) and families (VIII 41, Yaj I 360 f, Nārada, X 2) Vṛhaspati goes farther to enjoin that the king must approve of whatever the guilds do to other people in accordance with their rules whether that is cruel or kind (XVII 18)

These rules were meant to regulate distribution of profits and liabilities, investments and dividends among the members. According to the *Arthashastra*, guilds of workmen (*samgha bhūta*) and those who carry on co operative work (*sambhūya samutthatarah*) shall divide their earnings (*vetanam*) either equally or as agreed upon among themselves (III. 14) The rules of Nārada and Vṛhaspati on *sambhūya samutthanam* or joint transaction of business are more elaborate and relate to trade guilds as well as to craft guilds. The partners must share all legitimate expenses of business such as those incurred by (a) purchase and sale of merchandise, (b) provision for necessary travelling, (c) wages of labourers, (d) realisation of dues, (e) freight, (f) care of treasures (Nār III 4 and Vivadaratnakara's com.) The loss, expenses and profit of the business are to be shared by each partner according to the share contributed by him to the joint stock. A partner is responsible for any loss due to his want of care or any action without the assent or against the instructions of his co partners (Nār III 5, Vr XIV 9) Similarly he is entitled to a special remuneration for special profit gained through his individual action (Nār III

6 ; Vṛ. XIV. 10). The master craftsman is entitled to a double share of the profits. So also the head of an engineering firm building a house or a temple or digging a tank (Vṛ. XIV. 29).

The guilds took contract for work. The Arthaśāstra lays down its rules or terms between the  
 Rules of contract transacting parties (III. 11). Rules of contract bear also on the internal affairs of a guild. Vṛhaspati says that a contract executed by one is binding on all (XIV. 5). The rule of the Arthaśāstra is that a healthy person who deserts his company (of contract artisans) after work has been begun shall be fined 15 *panas* ; for none shall of his own accord leave his company. One found to have stealthily neglected his share of work shall be shown mercy for the first time and given proportional work anew with promise of proportional share in earnings. For neglecting again and going elsewhere he shall be  
 Sanction. thrown out of the company (*pravāsanam*).

For a glaring offence (*mahāparādha*) he shall be treated as condemned (*duṣyavad-ācāret*, III. 14). The Dharmaśāstras do not show the same leniency. According to Nārada and Vṛhaspati he who disobeys the laws or injures the joint stock is to be banished. A member who fails to implement an agreement entered into by his association is to be banished and his property confiscated. According to Yājñavalkya dishonesty is punished by expulsion from the guild and forfeiture of share in the profits. A disabled partner may, however, appoint a substitute to do his part of the work (II. 265).

The threat of expulsion for indiscipline and dishonesty was the sanction of the guild laws.  
 Judicial authority. Accordingly the association had complete judicial authority over its members. Vṛhaspati says that the partners are to be judges and witnesses in deciding their own disputes (XIV. 6). These disputes do not

necessarily relate to affairs of business, they might be strictly personal. Later law books emphasise the jurisdiction of local, popular courts like the *kula*, *śrenī*, *gana* and *pūga*—graded in ascending order of superiority (Nar. Intr. 7, Vr. I 28-30, Yaj. II. 30). This juridical power is recognised in the Buddhist literature. A man may be tried by his guild (*pūgamaññhagato*, Mn. 41, 114). Its interference is invoked to settle differences between the members and their wives (Vin. IV. 226). In the *Suttavibhanga* it is forbidden to ordain the wife of a member unless his guild had sanctioned it. This rigid control over the affairs of a well-knit corporation was exercised by an executive body of two to five persons presumably with a presiding head which also supervised the affairs of smaller associations (Vr. XVII. 10).

The finances of the guild consisted of individual earnings and contributions, fines and confiscations on delinquent members, king's subsidy (Vr. XVII. 24) and profits from executions of orders (Yaj. II. 190). Good profits accrued from the investment of the deposits which the guilds received from the king and the public as banks.<sup>1</sup> They might in their turn earmark a part of their capital to be set aside as safe deposit. The *Arthaśāstra* prescribes on this point that those who can be expected to relieve misery, who can give instructions to artisans, who can be trusted with deposits, who can plan artistic work after their own design, and who can be relied upon by guilds of artisans may receive the deposits of guilds. The guilds shall receive their deposits back in time of distress.

*Atthyapratikarṇaḥ kṛtsasitirah sannikseptirah svacitta  
kṛirah śrenipramāṇaḥ miksepam gṛhṇiyuh Vipattau śreni  
miksepam bhajet* IV. I

<sup>1</sup> For the banking activity of the *śrenī* see *infra*, Bk. IV, Ch. II.

The incomes were distributed as (a) dividend among members, (b) charity, (c) fresh investment.

deyaṃ niḥsva-vṛddhāndha-strī-bal'-ātura-rogiṣu  
 santānikādisu tathā eṣa dharmah sanātanaḥ  
 tato labhyet yatkūcit sarvesāmeva tatsamam  
 śāṇmāsikam māsikam vā vibhaktavyam yathāṃśataḥ

Vṛ. XVII. 23 f.

The Smṛti rules find positive illustrations from life. Four Benares weavers plied their trade jointly and used to divide their earnings in five shares, keeping four for their own and disposing of the fifth for charity.

Bārāṇasiyam pesakārā ekato hutvā tena kaṇimena laddhakam pañca koṭṭhāse katvā cattaṛo koṭṭhāse parabhuñjimsu pañcamam gahetvā ekato va dānam dadimsu.

Jāt. IV. 475.

Benevolent public works and religious contributions received equal attention. Among the votive offerings at Sanchi one is attributed to the guild of ivory-carvers. A cave inscription in Junnar records the gift of a seven-celled cave and of a cistern by the *śrenī* of corn-dealers.<sup>1</sup> A Gwalior Inscription (876 A.D.) records a temple-grant by a town where guilds of oil-millers (*tailikaśrenī*) and of gardeners (*mālikaśrenī*) levy a toll among themselves and assign it to the temple.<sup>2</sup>

The guilds while enjoying an autonomous life stood in close relation to the civil authority. The

Guild is as the  
 state : guardianship

legal masters enjoin a paternal and fostering care to be extended to industrial com-

binations. Not only must the king respect the guild laws but must also see that members thereof followed their own laws (Yāj. I. 361; Viṣ. III. 2; Nār. X. 2). To enforce observance of these laws and compacts among members

<sup>1</sup> Böhrer and Burges *Arch. Sur. W. Ind.*, IV 10

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. Ind.*, I 23.

similarly speak of one of bamboo-workers (*vasakāra*) another of braziers (*kasakāra*) and a third of corn-dealers (*dhamnīka*)<sup>1</sup> The collective gift of the ivory-workers at Vedisā (Sanchi Ins. C. 189) probably indicates that these artisans formed a *sreni*. Later inscriptions and inscriptions from the south add copiously to the list

The autonomy and entity of the guild was as much legal as real It had its distinguishing colours (Mbh. III 2 6 6) In the preparations made by the royal family and citizens of Mathura to witness the wrestling bout between Kṛṣṇa and Kāṁsa, pavilions were erected for different companies and corporations with flags representing the implements and emblems of the several crafts (*vakarṇa-dravyayuktābhīḥ patakābhīḥ* Harivamsa, 86 5) If the *nigama* of the coins of Taxila and of the Bhita seals refers to town corporations and not to industrial guilds, the Basarhi seals of the time of the Gupta emperors show a great advancement in guild activity referring to and giving the names of bankers (*sresthin*), traders (*sārthavaha*) and merchants (*kulika*), their members and their leaders (*prathama-kulika*) The civic affairs of the *nigama* were dominated by powerful trade and craft guilds<sup>2</sup>

The guild served not only as a bank receiving deposits at interest but also as a trustee and executor of endowments. An endowment in a guild bank is reported to be permanent so long as the guild retains its unity even if it moves to a different place<sup>3</sup> This shows its mobility and organisational perfection and the public confidence reposed in it. The 1,000 families of carpenters in a *gāma* who shifted wholesale overnight in boats and settled in an island in mid-sea is a typical illustration of this mobility (Jāt

<sup>1</sup> Bühler and Barges *Op cit* IV 10 24, 27

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p 185

<sup>3</sup> See *Gupta Inscriptions* No 16

IV, 159) Another example is a guild of skilled (prathita-śilpiḥ) silk-weavers who migrated from Lāta or southern Gujarat into the city of Dasapura and constructed "a noble and unequalled temple of the bright-rayed sun." After this the members began pursuing different occupations, e.g., music, story-telling (kathāvidyā), religious discourses (dharmaprasaṅga); some remained weavers, others changed into astrologers (jyotiṣī) or warriors (-amaṭapragā'bhāḥ) or recluse (vijita-viśvayaṅga). Still the corporate organisation was intact and the temple which had fallen into disrepair was restored by the same guild after a period of thirty-six years from its construction.<sup>1</sup> The larger civic conscience and communal spirit thus stood against the disruptive tendencies of contradictory tastes and occupations. This also shows the extent of intellectual life and culture nursed in a mere craft guild and the amount of independent development and freedom of choice permitted within its scope. But this is not the *śrenī* of the Jatakas and of the Smṛtis. We miss the team plying their shuttle together, the rules regulating collective contracts for a job, the allocation of shares and dues from a joint-stock. The institution imbibes cultural propensities and develops conflicting tastes in a growing urban atmosphere. It has lost its fundamental character of manual labour and the basic unity grown upon it. The earlier *śrenī* was an association of capitalist workers serving under the strictest regimentation who could all afford to pursue the so-called cultures and refinements as means of livelihood. The story of the Mandasor Inscription sets forth the first stage of disintegration of a well-knit craft guild with common economic interests. The process is hidden under the plaster of a higher but loose synthesis maintained only by tradition and personal association.

**BOOK III**

**TRADE AND COMMERCE**

Aññataro duggatakulaputto . mūsikam gahetvā ekas-  
 mimi āpane bilālāss' atthāya datvā kākānikam labhi.  
 Taya kākānikāya phānitam gahetvā ekena kutena pāṇiyam  
 ganhi. So araññato āgacchaṇṭe mālākāre disvā thokam  
 thokam phānitakhandam datvā ulomkena pāṇiyam adāsi.  
 Te tassa ekekam pupphamutthum adamsu. So tena  
 pupphamūlena punadivase pi phānitāñ ca pāṇiyaphatañ ca  
 gahetvā pupphārāmaṃ eva ga'o Tassa tam divasaṃ mālā-  
 karā addhacitake pupphagacche datva agamamsu. So na  
 cirass' eva imina upāyena attha kahāpane labhi. Puna  
 ekasmimi vātavutthidivase rūpyyāne bahū sukkhadandakā  
 ca sākhā ca palāsañ ca vātena patitam hoti Uyyānapālo  
 chaddetum upāyam na passati So tattha gantvā sace  
 imāni dārupannāni mayham dassasi ahan te imāni sabbāni  
 nīharissāmi ti uyyānapālam āha. So ganha ayyā ti sam-  
 paticchi. Cullantevāsiko dārakānaṃ kelimandilam gantvā  
 phānitam datvā muhuttēna sabbāni dārupannāni nīharāpetvā  
 uyyānadvāre rāsīm kāresi. Tadā rājakumbhakāro rāja-  
 kulānaṃ bhājanānaṃ pacanattāya dārūni ganhi. Tam  
 divasaṃ Cullantevāsiko dāruvikkayena solasa kahāpane  
 cātīdāni ca pañca bhājanāni labhi. So catuvisatiya kahā-  
 panesu jātesu " atthi ayam upāyo mayhan " ti nagara-  
 dvārato avidūratthāne ekam pāṇiyacātīm thapetvā pañcasate  
 tinahārake pāṇiyena upatthahi. Te āhamsu : " tvam  
 samma ambhākam bahūpakāro, kin te karamā " ti. So  
 " mayham kicce uppanne karissattha " ti vatvā ito e' ito ca  
 vicaranto thalapathakammikena ca jalapathakammikena ca  
 saddhim mittasanthavam akāsi. Tassa thalapathakammiko  
 " sve imam nagaram assavāmi jako pañca assasatāni gahetvā  
 agamissati 'ti " ācikkhi. So tassa vacanam sutvā tinahārake  
 āha " ajja mayham ekekam tinakalāpam detha, mayā ca  
 tine avikkhite attano tinam ma vikkimathā " 'ti. Te



“sādhū” ’ti sampatīcchitvā pañca tīṇakalāpasatāni āharitvā tassa ghare pātayimṣu. Assavāṇiḥṣo sakalanagare assānam tīṇam alabbhitvā tassa sabassam datvā tam tīṇam gaṇhi. Tato katipāhaccayena tassa jalapathakammikasaḥāyako ārocesi : “paṭṭanam mahānāva āgatā” ’ti. ‘So ‘atthi ayaṃ upāyo’ ti atṭhaḥi kaḥāpaṇehi sabbaparivārasampannam tāvakālikam ratham gaḥetvā mahāntena yasena nāvā-paṭṭanam gantvā ekaṃ angulimuddikam nāvāya saccakāram datvā avidūratṭhāne sāṇim parikkhipāpetvā nisīno purise āṇāpesi : “bāhirato vāṇijesu āgatesu tatiyena pāṭihārena ārocethā” ’ti. “Nāvā āgatā” ’ti sutvā Bārāṇasito satamattā vāṇijā “bhaṇḍam gaṇbāmā” ’ti āgamimṣu. “Bhaṇḍam tumhe na lābhissatha, asukaṭṭhāne nāma mahāvāṇijena saccakāro dīno” ti. Te tam sutvā tassa santikam āgatā. Pādamūlikapurisā purimasāññavasena tatiyenā pāṭihārena tesam āgatabhāvam ārocesum. Te satamattāpi vāṇijā ekekaṃ sabassam datvā tena saddhim nāvāya pattikā hutvā puna ekekaṃ sabassam datvā pattim vissajjāpetvā bhaṇḍam attano santakam akamṣu. Cullantevāsiko dve sata-sabassāni gaṇhitvā Bārāṇasim āgantvā.....

Cullakasetṭhi Jātaka.

A young man of good family but reduced circumstances.....picked up the mouse which he sold for a *kākaṇi* at a shop for their cat. With the *kākaṇi* he got molasses and took drinking water in a waterpot. Coming on flower-gatherers returning from the forest, he gave each a tiny quantity of the molasses and ladled the water out to them. Each of them gave him a handful of flowers, with the proceeds of which, next day, he came back again to the flower grounds provided with more molasses and a pot of water. That day the flower-gatherers, before they went, gave him flowering plants with half the flowers left on them; and thus in a little while he obtained eight *kaḥāpaṇas*.

Later, one rainy and windy day, the wind blew down a quantity of rotten branches and boughs and leaves in the king's pleasure, and the gardener did not see how to clear them away. Then up came the youngman with an offer to remove the lot, if the wood and leaves might be his. The gardener closed with the offer on the spot. Then this young apprentice repaired to the children's playground and in a little while got them by bribes of molasses to collect every stick and leaf in the place into a heap at the entrance to the pleasure. Just then the king's potter was on the look out for fuel to fire bowls for the palace, and coming on this heap, took the lot off his hands. That day the young apprentice by selling the wood obtained sixteen *kahāpanas* as well as five bowls and other vessels. Having now twenty-four *kahāpanas* in all, a plan occurred to him. He went to the vicinity of the city-gate with a jar full of water and supplied 500 mowers with water to drink. Said they, "you have done us a good turn, friend. What can we do for you?" "Oh I'll tell you when I want your aid," said he; and as he went about, he struck up an intimacy with a land-trader (?) and a sea-trader (?). Said the former to him, "To-morrow there will come to town a horse-dealer with 500 horses to sell." On hearing this piece of news, he said to the mowers, "I want each of you to-day to give me a bundle of grass and not to sell your own grass till mine is sold." "Certainly," said they, and delivered the 500 bundles of grass at his house. Unable to get grass for his horses elsewhere, the dealer purchased our friend's grass for a thousand pieces. Only a few days later his sea-trading friend brought him news of the arrival of a large ship in port; and another plan struck him. He hired for eight *kahāpanas* a well-appointed carriage which plied for hire by the hour, and went in great style down to the port. Having bought the ship on credit and deposited his signet-ring as security, he had a pavilion pitched hard by and said

to his people as he took his seat inside, "when merchants are being shown in, let them be passed on by three successive ushers into my presence." Hearing that a ship had arrived in port, about a hundred merchants came down to the cargo, only to be told that they could not have it as a great merchant had already made a payment on account. So away they all went to the young man ; and the footmen duly announced them by three successive ushers as had been arranged beforehand. Each man of the hundred severally gave him a thousand pieces to buy a share in the ship and then a further thousand each to buy him out altogether. So it was with 200,000 pieces that this little apprentice returned to Benares.

## CHAPTER I

### DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATION OF TRADE

Trade a natural sequel to industry    The different trades    Market place  
The small trader or hawker    Big traders' caravan    Correspondents    Wholesale and retail trade.

Corporate organisation    Partnership and guilds

Trade methods    Speculation    Transaction on credit    Advertisement and publicity    Depression    The successful vendor

The *setthi*    His fabulous wealth    Stores    His relation with king with fellow merchants and citizens    Hereditary office?    Assignee of tolls    His unofficial rank    Administrative function    Benevolent work

Trade follows industry

[Trade is a natural sequel to industry. In the wake of a *sippa* must follow *vohāra*] For an industrial product must as a matter of course look for a market for its disposal. Such markets and such transactions are necessary concomitants of any industrial effort and occur in the earliest stages of economic life. With the specialisation of industries and their localisation in particular places, whether in a whole country or in a village or in a small street of a town, this commercial intercourse multiplies in proportion. The horse-producing Sindhū and the cloth-manufacturing Kaśī are brought into the same intimate economic relationship as were formerly the animal-breeder and weaver plying their trade side by side in the same village. Exchange of goods bound down the whole land of India, particularly the north, in a close economic unity to which even Rome, Egypt, Arabia, Persia, China, Indonesia and farther East were brought into brisk commercial intercourse.

[Between the producer and the consumer stood the stockist and the middleman. The vendor stocked various goods from producers in his shop for sale. We know of grain merchants (*dhañūka*)

who kept double-mouthed sample-bags (ubhatimukhā mutoli) to keep samples in of various sorts of grain (Dn. XXII. 5). (Merchants traded in diverse article like fruits, herbs, sugarcane, honey, ointment, planks of wood, tooth-brush and smoking-pipe (Jāt. IV. 495). Among traders, practising in a town are dealers in cloth (dussika), in perfumes (gandhika), groceries (pannika), fruits (phalika), and roots (mūlika) (Mil. 331, 262). <sup>¶</sup> Tulādhāra, the trader lived by selling juices (rasa), scents (gandha), barks and timbers, herbs, fruits and roots<sup>1</sup> (Mbh. XII. 261 2). (The shops were set up in rows on the two sides of the main thoroughfares or around the market place (singhātaka, gāmamajjha, bhaṇḍa-bhajanīyam thānam) with a tendency for shops of the same wares to group together forming a special bazar of their own)

[Shops were not always stationary. They might be moving. In the Jātakas the hawker is a common sight. A merchant goes about from village to village hawking goods on a doukey's back (vāṇijo gadrabhabharakena vohāram karonto vicarati, II. 109 ff.). A petty hawker shouts with his wagon in the middle of the village (gāmamajjhe) with "buy my cucumber, buy my cucumber" (I. 205). A grocer's daughter (pannikadhītā) hawks jujubes in a basket "buy my jujubes, buy my jujubes" (badarāṃ ganhatha badarāṇi ganbathā'ti, III. 21). Sometimes these people evince a higher sort of business intelligence. Two potters apportion two streets in the same town between themselves to eliminate competition and peddle their pots from door to door (I. 111).]

<sup>1</sup> The producer and the dealer are not always clearly distinguished. *E.g.*, the *gandhika* may mean one who prepares scents as well as one who stocks and sells them. So an *odonīṭa* is both a caterer and a distributor of foodstuffs.

Besides these small traders there were big merchants who collected huge cart-loads of wares from their centres of production and sent them to distant countries where they might be sold at a higher price. The *Jātakas* are full of references to caravans or long lines of two-wheeled bullock carts such as is represented at Bharhut in the scene of the purchase and gift of the Jetavana. Their strength is given at the conventional figure of 500 wagons under a leader (*sathavāba*, I. 98, 368, 377, 404; III. 200, 403; V. 164, 471). "The carts struggled along slowly, through the forests, along the tracts from village to village kept open by the peasants. The pace never exceeded two miles an hour. Smaller streams were crossed by gullies leading down to fords, the longer ones by cart ferries."<sup>1</sup> Regarding one of these an interesting piece of information is given. A great caravan of one thousand carts (*mabāsakaṭṭosattbo sakatasabassam*) was going from the East country to the West country. Wherever it went it consumed swiftly straw, wood, water and verdure (*tinokattbodakam haritakavannam*). Now in that caravan were two caravan-leaders each commanding one-half of the carts.<sup>2</sup> Thinking that wherever we go we consume everything—they divided the caravan into two equal portions and equipped with food and provender started separately (Dn. XIII. 23; cf. *Jāt.* I. 98).

(The trade magnates had "correspondents" in big and opulent cities with whom they disposed of their goods wholesale.) A correspondent and friend of Anāthapiṇḍika at the border sent 500 cart-loads of local wares to barter in the shop of the Sāvattṭhi merchant. The people were hospitably received, lodged and provided with money for their needs,—and given goods

<sup>1</sup> Rhys Davids *Buddhist India*, p. 98

<sup>2</sup> So the unit of 500 under the charge of one *sattavarāha* remains intact.

in exchange. A return despatch from Ananthapindika was summarily refused with insults by the border correspondent for which however he was paid back in his own coin during the next offer from him (Jat I 377)

The wholesale dealers distributed the wares to retail dealers on a commission or share of the profit. The rules of the Arthashastra on retail sale seem to be based on the assumption that the latter did not purchase the goods and sell them in better terms to derive a middleman's profit. They were rather agents or salesmen of wholesale dealers, possibly representing several at a time. The Arthashastra lays down

Whole sale and retail trade  
 'Retail dealers selling the merchandise of others at prices prevailing at particular localities and times shall hand over to the wholesale dealers as much of the sale proceeds and profit as is realised by them. Rules of sealed deposit shall apply here. If owing to distance in time or place there occurs any fall in the value of the merchandise, the retail dealers shall pay the value and profit at that rate which obtained when they received the merchandise.'

Vaiyyavītyakara yathadeśikānam vikramanam panyam yathajātamulyamudayam ca dāhyuh. Śesamupanidhinaḥ vyakhyatam. Deśikālitipātane va paribhramam sampradana lalikenā arghena mālyam udayam ca dāhyuh.

"This rule does not hold good for servants selling their masters wares. Such merchants as belong to trade guilds or are trustworthy and are not condemned by the king need not restore even the value of that merchandise which is lost or destroyed owing to its inherent defects or to some unforeseen accidents. But of such merchandise as is distanced by time or place, they shall restore as much value and profit as remains after making allowance for wear and tear of the merchandise.

"Samvṛjyābhāṅkesu va pratyayil esvarajavācyesu bhṛeso paṇipitabhṛim nāstam vināstam va mulyamapi na dādyuh.

Deśakālāntaritānām tu paṇyānām kṣayavyayaśuddhamūlyamudayaṃ ca dadyuh. Paṇyasamavāyānaṃ ca pratyaṃśaṃ. III. 12.

Elsewhere it is given that the trader should calculate the daily earnings of middlemen and fix that amount on which they are authorised to live; for whatever income falls between sellers and purchasers (*i.e.*, brokerage) is different from profit.

Yannirṣṭam upajīveyuh tadeṣām divasasañjātaṃ saṃkhyāya vaṇik sthāpayet. Kreṭṭ-vikreṭṭo-rantarapatitaṃ ādāyātanyaṃ bhavati. IV. 2.

This is obviously the agent's commission which is to be fixed by the trader to a rate likely to give an enterprising middleman quite a decent income.()

(Corporate organisation as developed in industries did not progress as far in commerce. With regard to industries (guild organisation was the order of the day, with commerce it was an exception, it being generally pursued individually and independently. Partnership was of course not uncommon. Vidura quotes an adage to king Dhṛtarāṣṭra that concerns of wealth should not be pursued alone (Mbh. V. 33. 50). (Two merchants from Sāvātthi trade with their wares in 500 cart-loads from the East country to the West country and come back to Sāvātthi with a lucrative profit.)

Sāvātthivāsino hi kuṭavāṇijo ca paṇḍitavāṇijo ca dve janā pattikā hutvā pañcasakaṭasatāni bhaṇḍassa pūretvā pubbantato aparantaṃ vicaramānā vohāraṃ katvā bahu-lābhaṃ labhitvā Sāvātthiṃ paccāgamimsu.

(They then set down to divide the returns (Jāt. II. 167). Similarly two merchants from Benares dispose their wares in the country districts in partnership (dve janā ekato vaṇijjaṃ karontā laddhalābhā). They fall to quarrel over the share of the proceeds, one claiming share of a half on the strength of equal investment in stock-in-trade,



another two-third on the score of superior acumen. The former wins (I. 404).)

(But of the *seni*, *gāma* and *pūga* there is hardly any reference.) In the Karle Cave is recorded a gift by the *gāma* of traders (*vaniya-gāmasa*) from *Dhenukākātā*, but (nothing is known about its nature or constitution.)

Guild

Trade guilds seem to be conceived in the rules of Gautama (XI. 20 f) and in the prognosis of the *Arthaśāstra* that traders unite to raise prices like modern corners and make a profit of cent per cent (VIII 4). (But as has been already seen individual tradesmen entered into similar compacts for mutual interest from their inherent business instinct, and these show at best an appreciation of the community of commercial interests. Instances of co-operation are not rare. Parties of mariners voyaging by the same vessel under a *jetṭhaka* may have chartered it in concert) (Jāt. II. 128; IV. 133 ff; V. 75; VI. 34). (Parties in a caravan were brought together for purposes of safety through long forest journeys and accepted the leadership of the *satthavāha* for guidance as to halts, watering, precautions against brigands and beasts, routes, fording, etc.<sup>1</sup> "Subordination was not however always ensured (Jāt. I 108, 368; II. 295; III. 200), and the institution does not warrant the inference of any further syndicalism among traders.)" As regards commercial organisation, Mrs. Rhys Davids' statement stands substantially correct: that there is "no instance as yet produced from early Buddhist documents pointing to any corporate organisation of the nature of a guild or Hansa League."<sup>2</sup> Later literature gives undisputed evidences of such leagues. For example, in the *Sukīanīti* "a *sāmayikapatra* or business deed is one which individuals frame after combining their

<sup>1</sup> For example the merchants in a party of 1,000 under the two leaders in Dn XIII 23. See *supra*, p 255.

<sup>2</sup> Cambridge History, p 211.

shares of capital (svadhanāṃśa) for some business concern (vyavahāra) (II. 11. 627 f.). The reason for the somewhat later development of commercial combines was probably that trade was still a wandering profession while industrial organisations depended largely upon settled relations and ties of neighbourhood.

(Trade in the Jātakas is very often speculative. A young man picks up and sells a dead mouse and by successful dealings works up the capital to become rich. The last transaction is in a ship's cargo which he holds and disposes at 200,000 pieces (I. 120-122). The outlay being 1,000 the profit is 20,000 p.c. 100, 200 and 400 p.c. are the profits at which caravan masters barter their wares (I. 98 ff., 109; IV. 2). A boy begins with a humble stock-in-trade, voyages to Suvannabhūmi with some other merchants in a ship and makes enough money to recover his paternal kingdom) (VI. 34).

(Indications to the development of commerce may be had from the prevalence of several trade practices) Business deeds or documents recording a description of the property purchased and the price paid for it were known among merchants (Vṛ. VIII. 7; cf. Śuk. III. 378 f.). Big deals were made on credit. The speculating young man bought the cargo of a ship on credit giving his signet ring as security. Sale by public auction after notification is witnessed by Strabo (XV. i. 50-52)<sup>1</sup> and in the Arthasāstra (II. 21). Merchants advertised their goods by singing their praise themselves (vāṇijā viya vācasanthutiya. Com: yathā vāṇijo attano bhaṇḍassa vaṇṇam eva bhaṇati, V. 425) or through an agent, e.g., the hostess of a travelling tailor (tunnavāya)

<sup>1</sup> Vincent Smith has corrected the reading to sale after having the royal seal (Asoka).

who on his behalf gives publicity to his profession in the village (*amra vitharabhiṅgamu roccitu, sa sakāḥgāme roceṣi*) so that in one day 1,000 pieces were earned (VI 366). Political crises had their repercussions on business transactions. After Rama's exile the business of Ayodhya suffered under general depression and shops remained closed for several days (Ram II 18 36 f., 71 11).

The application, judgement, cleverness and 'connexion' of the successful shopkeeper (*pāṇikā*) are interestingly discussed (An I 116 f. cf. Mn II 7, Vin I 205). He is shrewd (*sakḥhumī*), knowing his goods (*pañyam jñāti*) this article bought for so much and sold for so much, will bring in so much money, such and such profit (*idam pañyam evam kṛtam evam vikṛtayaṁ mayi ettrakṛtaṁ mulam bhaviṣṣati itthaṁ udayo ti*). He is clever (*vidhuro*), skilful in buying and selling goods (*kusalo hoti pañyam kṛtun ca vikṛtun ca*). He inspires confidence (*niṣṣaya sumpanno*), inasmuch as wealthy people seeing his stability give him credit. Possessed of these three characteristics, a shopkeeper in no time attains greatness and increase of wealth (*tīhi angeli sampannigato pāṇiko na cirass eva mahantattam va vepullattam va pāpunati bhoḥsu*).

Despite the absence of the guild system, that there was a certain organisation in urban business is apparent from the role of the *setthi*. The words *sresthin* and *raṣṭhya*, used in the Vedic literature would appear from their contents, to mean 'headman' and 'his position of primacy'.<sup>1</sup> (Later, in Pali literature the *setthi* conveys the idea of one of the upper bourgeoisie, a great merchant or commercial magnate

<sup>1</sup> Macdonell and Keith *Vedic Index*

who sends his caravan from *pubbanta* to *aparanta* or ships his cargo across the high seas. In a more technical sense the *setthi* was the head of this trading class, a wealthy and popular magnate who, like the rural *bhojaka* and the industrial *jetthaka*, stood in close relation to the king.) (His wealth is computed at the conventional figure of 80 crores) (Jat. I 345, 444, 466, II 331; III. 56, 129, 300, IV 1, 255; V 382). He stocked huge quantities of grain in his granaries (I. 467) obviously to dispose in scarcity on advantageous terms. With his big capital he employed small craftsmen and benefited by their labour (*setthim missaya vasantassa tunnakarassa tunnakammena jivissama*, IV. 38). The *setthi* of Rajagaha is competent to pay 200,000 *kahāpanas* as medical fee (Mv. VIII. 16).

The compound *Rajagahasetthi* is a pointer to the fact that the richest merchant of a town or village, the *setthi par excellence*, discharged certain specific functions and had a unique position with respect to others. In the inscriptions of the Sanchi tope the *setthi* of a village is in several instances mentioned without his proper name, while the *gahapati* appears with his name and sometimes village as well.<sup>1</sup> (His was a position of authority over the fellow traders.) (During his dedication of the Jetavana, Anathapindikā, the chief *setthi* of Sāvattihī was attended by 500 *setthi*s).

(Through this leader the king maintained his contact with the mercantile community. In this capacity of a go-between the *setthi* filled one of the highest offices of state (*setthittvāna*, Jat I 120 ff.; III 448, V 382, *setthita*, Mahavamsa, p 69). The *gahapati*, one of the seven jewels (*ratanaṃ*) of a king is explained by Buddhaghosa as *setthi-gahapati*

<sup>1</sup> The *setthi*, who appears with his name and place in the Kari Cave In., is an ordinary merchant, not the chief *setthi*.

This official is often seen waiting upon the king (*rajaṣṭhānam gato*, III 19, *rajaṣṭhānam katvā*, IV 63). His relation is sometimes informal and personal. A king desirous of renouncing the world is supplicated by his parents, wife, children, the commander-in-chief, the *setthi*, and the people. The *setthi* offers him his accumulated fortune and requests him to stay (V 185).

The rich business lord probably led the co-operative efforts of merchants in his town and was very popular with his community. Presumably this popularity and influence with his community and with the people at large was the reason for his selection into king's service. The *setthi* of Rājagaha does good service both to the king and to the merchants community (*ayam kho setthigabapati bahūpakaro añño c'eva negamassa ca*, Mv VIII 16). A *setthi* in office is honoured both by the king and by citizens and countryfolk alike (*rajaṣṭhānagarajaṇapadapūjito*, V 382). When the princes and queens fell victim to a king's furore the citizens uttered not a word, but when the *setthi*s were seized for execution, the whole city was troubled and the people went with their relatives and begged for mercy (VI 135).

The *setthi* therefore was not a civil official in the sense the *senapati* or the *amatya* was. (As an intermediary, he was half an official and half a popular figure) (As an official he was selected by the king on the basis of his wealth and influence (Jat I 120-22) ) (But as the son generally succeeded to his father's trade (II 64, 236, *setthiṇuseththiṇam kulānam puttā*, Mv I 9 1) and inherited his wealth and influence, the office of the *setthi* nominally selective, tended to be hereditary) (The sixth descendant of a *setthi* is found continuing in the post of his forefathers (Jat V 384). There is little to distinguish between social rank

Position with citizens

Hereditary office ?  
Social rank

and civil office in this respect.<sup>1</sup> The two were co-existent and a *setṭhi* fallen in social position was little likely to continue in the king's grace ; nor would the king make an alternative selection when the son of the retired official was fit to take the mantle)

The specific functions of the *setṭhi* as a civil official is nowhere clearly defined. A king by his Administrative functions. decree makes a gift of the East market town to a merchant (*pācinayavamajjhaka gāmam rājabhogena bhuñjā'ti*) and makes the other thousand merchants his subordinate (*sesasetṭhino eṭass'eva upatṭhākā hontu*, VI. 344). There is hardly any authority to render *setṭhi* as ' treasurer ' <sup>2</sup> for which the Pali word is *bhaṇḍā-gārika*. (He may have assisted the king in framing his financial policy and advised him on the methods and rates of assessment on big business. He carried the king's orders to his fellow merchants and presumably was responsible for their execution. As emoluments for his services, the tolls, taxes and customs dues of a particular business area might be assigned to him. Sometimes he was assisted by a second (*anusetthi*, Jāt. V. 384 ; Mv. I. 9. 1) from his own class. He had little to do with the king's treasury.)

Municipal power. With the growing industrial and commercial life of the town, the *setṭhi* rose into power and prominence and came to play a new rôle. As leader of the most important urban class and as a civil official of the highest rank he was the hot favourite to be entrusted with municipal administration,—to be promoted to the *viṣaya*-council or even to the position of Lord Mayor. The Basarhi seals and the Damodarpur and Paharhpur Inscriptions throw sidelights into the civic functions of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. " . . . it would seem that the rank of *setṭhi* was hereditary, and this is confirmed by the later literature, but this applies to the social rank only, and not to the office " Rhys Davids · *Vinaya Texts*, I, p 102.

<sup>2</sup> In the translation of the Jātakas under Cowell's editorship

the *setthi*. This is nothing strange for the head of a class who, like the upper bourgeoisie of the national democratic age in Europe, were at the forefront of every liberal movement and set the example of unstinted charity. The hoarded crores of Ananthpindika, emptied for the alleviation of the miseries of the poor and for the propitiation of the Samgha, the great *cailya* cave at Kaila and similar costly gifts at Kanheri, Mathura and Sanchi give a glimpse into the means and ways by which they attained to their phenomenal power and popularity.

## CHAPTER II

### PRICE AND MARKET

Free bargain • haggling    Price quotations    Customary rates and indeterminate price    Price-fixing    The court valuer    Price regulation    Statute fixed prices    Cornering and inflation of price    Proportion between big and small trade  
Standard of living

“ And because they first bargain and afterwards come to terms (the priest and the king over the *soma* juice in terms of cow-payment) therefore, about any and everything that is for sale here, people first bargain and afterwards come to terms ” (Sat. Br III iii. 3. 1-4.)

This practice of a “ free bargain ” unregulated by law and custom was widely prevalent up to the beginning of the 6th century B.C. Prices were determined mostly by haggling, sometimes climbing up from a single *lahāpana* to 100 or 1,000 (Jāt III 126 f ) “ The act of exchange between producer or dealer, and consumer was, both before and during the Jātaka age, a ‘ free ’ bargain, a transaction unregulated by any system of statute-fixed prices. Supply, limited by slow transport and individualistic production, but left free and stimulated, under the latter system, to efforts after excellence on the one hand and to tricks of adulteration on the other,..... sought to equate with a demand which was no doubt largely compact of customary usage and relatively unaffected by the swifter fluctuations termed fashion.”<sup>1</sup>

The statement may be best examined in the light of some available price quotations which may be arranged into the following schedule :

<sup>1</sup> Mrs Rhys Davids • J R A S , 1901, p 875



COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
<b>ANIMALS</b>			
Slave—male or female		100 <i>la āpana</i>	Satapatahitadana Jat. I 224 satapitadana III 343
Slave—king's son		1 000 gold <i>nikkā</i>	VI 547
A serviceable ass	Mithila	8 <i>lahapana</i>	VI 343
Oxen—1 pair	Benares	24	II 305
An average horse		1 000	II 306
A thoroughbred foal		6 000	II 259
A team of chariot horses	Mithila	90 000	VI 401
A nice plump dog		1 + a cloak	II 247
A dead mouse		1 <i>kakani</i>	I 120
<b>EATABLES</b>			
Meat for a chameleon	Mithila	1 <i>kakani</i> — 1 <i>māsaka</i>	VI 346
A fish		7 <i>masala</i>	II 404
A jar of spirits	Benares	1 <i>kalāpana</i>	I 350
Ghee or oil—a small modicum	Savatthi	1	Vin IV 248 f
Dinner dish for royal horse	Benares	100 000	I 178
Royal dinner dish		100 000	II 319
<b>CLOTHING</b>			
Man's cloak—1	Savatthi	16 <i>kalāpana</i>	Vin IV 250
A robe for a court lady		1 000	II 24
A Sivi robe		1 000	VI 401
A robe of Kāśī muslin	Vedeha	100 000	Satasahasasagghasikham kasavatthana III 11 VI 403 450
Shoes or sandals—each pair according to quality	Savatthi	100 1 000	IV 15
Jewelled hangings of a royal elephant		2 000 000	VI 488
Tailoring repairs a day's earnings in a village	Benares	1 000	VI 306

COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
ORNAMENTS			
An ornament of a <i>Savatthi setthi's</i> wife	Savatthi	100 000 <i>lahapana</i>	III 435
Gold necklace fitted with sandalwood	Sivi	100 000 ,	VI, 480 I 340
Gold wreath of a <i>setthi's</i> wife		1,000 ..	Sahasagghanikamp kancanamalam, II 373
MISCELLANEOUS			
Sandal perfume (quantity?)		100 000 <i>lahapana</i>	Salasahassagghanikamp candanasaram, II 373
Garland, perfume and spirits for day labourers	Benares	$\frac{1}{2}$ <i>masaka</i> + $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>māsaka</i>	III 446
A bundle of grass	Benares	1 <i>masaka</i>	III 130
Merit of a pious act	Savatthi	200 500 <i>lahapana</i>	I 422,
HOUSE AND FIELD			
A play hall for 1 000 boys worked by voluntary labour	Mithila	1,000 <i>lahapana</i>	VI 332
A monastic cell		500 ,	Pañcasatam viharām, Mn 52
✓ A field (measurement?)	Nasik	4 000	Nasik Cave In
JOURNEY AND TRANSIT			
Hire of carriage per hour	Benares	8 ..	I 121
Tording of 500 carts hiring a bull	Benares	1,000 ..	I 195
Fee for a forest conveyance	,	1 000 ,	II 335, V 22, 471
✓ Ferry toll for			
1 empty cart	Brahmarshi	1 ,	Manu VIII 401
1 man's load	(Kuru)	$\frac{1}{2}$ ..	
1 animal and	Pañcala		
1 woman	Matasya,	$\frac{1}{2}$ ,	
1 man without load	Surasena)	$\frac{1}{2}$	
FEES, PENSIONS AND SALARIES			
Teacher's honorarium (for a whole course)	Taxila	1,000 <i>kalapana</i>	I 205, II 47, 278
,		7 <i>ni/ kha</i> (insufficient)	IV 38 V 128 IV 224
Actors—to tour a whole country	Benares	1 000 <i>lahapana</i>	III 61,
Doctors—for curing	Saketa	16,000 ..	Vin I 272
<i>setthi's</i> wife		+ 2 slaves, a carriage and horses	

COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
Doctor's—for curing a <i>seth</i>	Rājagaha	20,000 <i>kahapana</i>	Mv
Court valuer s for each testing	Bharu <i>kaccha</i>	8 „ <i>(insufficient)</i>	IV 138
Chief Courtesan s—1 night	Benares	1,000 <i>kahapana</i>	III 435, 51 f, 175. IV 218 f
„ „	Vesali	50 „	Mv VIII 1
„ „	Rājagaha	100 „	Mv VIII 3
Chief Courtesan s salary		1,000 „	Arth II 27
Snake charmer's wind fall—1 day		1 000 „	IV 458
Hire of an assassin		1 000 „	V 126
Archer—capable of exhibition shooting—1 year	Benares	100,000 „ (274 <i>kahapana</i> daily, too high)	II 87
„ „ 1 fortnight	„	1,000 <i>kahapana</i> (67 <i>Ks</i> daily, normal)	I 357
„ „ 1 day	„	1,000 <i>kahapana</i> (too high)	V 128
Tracker of footsteps	Benares	1,000 <i>kahapana</i>	III 565
A <i>coahne</i> —1 day		1— $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>masala</i>	III 326
Pension for courtiers and Brahmanas—1 day	Anga	100 <i>kahapana</i> 500 „ 1,000 „	Mn 94
Salary of royal Officers Grades—1 year or month		48,000 „ 24,000 „ 12 000 „ 8,000 „ 1 000 „ 2,000 „ 1,000 „ 500 60 „	Arth V 3
Spies grades—		1,000 250	
Messenger—for 1 <i>yajana</i>		10 „	
Messenger for 1 <i>yaj</i> above 10 up to 100		20 „	
Superintendent of stables		10,000	Mbh III 57 6

A few customary rates are quite apparent, *e g.*, 100 *kahapana*s for a slave, 100,000 for a gold necklace or costly jewellery, 1,000 for a hall, for a course of learning or for a visit to the chief courtesan, 67 coppers a day for a skilful archer is

Customary rates and indeterminate price

quite fair but the figures of 274 or 1,000 are pretty high to excite the jealousy of other officers. Similarly 8 coppers for each valuation is contemptuously refused as a 'barber's gift' by a price expert. But except for a few items like these it is hazardous to theorise on the basis of the Pali canonical data. (Figures are often hyperbolic and wrecklessly exaggerated. Fancy prices are quoted for articles of royal consumption irrespective of their real valuation.) (The price for a horse or mare may range from 1 *kahāpana* to 100,000.) A pair of shoes presented to Buddha may worth double the cost of building a *vihāra* and while sandal-perfume may sell at the rate of 100,000, a pair of water-carriers may plan their merry-making with garland, perfume and spirits with a purse of 1/16 of a *kahāpana*. (Prices varied not only in localities and with the ingress and egress of the commodity. It depended to a great extent on the fancy of the customer and on the need and bargaining capacity of the parties.)

(But better business principles than unrestricted bargaining were just beginning to dawn. For certain commodities and in certain quarters the advantages of a fixed price were growingly realised. When two merchants were bound for the same destination with their caravan, it was for the foolish merchant to gloat over 'fixing his own price' and anticipate his competitor. The wise Bodhisatta chose to go after him thinking "haggling over prices is killing work; whereas I following later shall sell my wares at the price already fixed") (*agghatthapanam nāma manussānam jīvītā voropanasadisam, aham pacchato gantvā etehi thapitagghen'eva bhandam vikkinissāmi*, Jāt. I. 98).

(The beginning of price fixation is in the institution of the court-valuer (agghakāraka, agghāpanika, Com. Therag. 20, 393 ff.; Jāt. I. 124). He settled the price of goods ordered for the palace.

He stood between the dilemma of offending the king with too high a rate and of driving away the tenders by excessive cheapening. In making an estimate he had to consider the fancy and liberality of his master. His decision was liable to revision by the king (II 31) and he himself was not immune from bribes and baits (I 124 126). In spite of these drawbacks the system conduced to set up certain standard rates.) The office of the court valuer was also gradually transformed into that of a price expert or into a ministry or board of price control for the whole market. The municipal bodies of the Mauryas regulated prices (Str XV 1 50). In the Arthashastra it is ordained that the price expert shall, on consideration of outlay, quantity manufactured, amount of toll, interest on outlay, hire and other expenses, fix the price of merchandise with due regard to its having been manufactured long ago or imported from a distant country.

Desakalantaritānam tu panyānam piaksepam panyānis  
pattim sulkam vṛddhimavakrayam vyvānyamsca sam-  
khyāya sthāpayet argham arghavit, IV 2

[Statute-fixed prices appear first in Manu and in the Arthashastra. According to the Arthashastra a profit of 5 per cent over and above the fixed price of local commodities and of 10 per cent on foreign produce will be fixed. Merchants who raise the price or realise profit even to the extent of  $\frac{1}{2}$  pana more than the above in the sale or purchase of commodities shall be fined 5 panas in case of realising 100 to 200 panas (tatah paramargham vṛdhayatam kṛye vikṛye vā bhavayātum panaśate pauca prāddisṛto dandah, IV 2). In Manu, the king is to settle prices publicly with the merchants every fifth or fourteenth day, fixing "the rates for the purchase and sale of all marketable goods" after consideration of their expenses of production (VIII 401 f.)

Statutory price and  
price control

With growing commercialisation new economic factors arose to set the legal price at nought. <sup>Cornering and inflation</sup> Against the big business and monopoly concerns the royal statute was of little avail. It is confessed in the Arthasāstra that "traders unite in causing rise and fall in the value of articles, and live by making profits cent per cent in *paṇas* or *kumbhas*" (vaidehakāstu sambhūya paṇyānām utkarṣopakarṣam kurvānāḥ paṇe paṇaśatam kumbhe kumbhaśatam ityājīvanti, VIII. 4). To meet this evil, "merchants who conspire either to prevent the sale of merchandise or to sell or purchase commodities at higher prices shall be fined 1,000 *paṇas*" (vaidehakānām vā sambhūya paṇyam avaruddhatām anargheṇa vikrīṇatām krīṇatām vā sahasraṃ daṇḍaḥ, IV. 2). Yājñavalkya also imposes the highest amercement "for traders combining to maintain price to the prejudice of labour and artisans, although knowing the rise or fall of prices" or "to obstruct the sale of a commodity by demanding a wrong price, or for selling it" (II. 249 f.). Viṣṇu ordains the same punishments for a company of merchants who prevent the sale of a commodity by selling it under its price, and for those of a company who sell an article for more than its worth (V. 125 f.). "The sale or purchase should be conducted at the price which is fixed by the king, the surplus made therefrom is understood to be the legal profit of traders." ]

That these well-meaning efforts of the state were lost upon the designing merchants is further proved by the fact that the state itself fell in line with the same tactics. As owner and controller of vast state manufactures, the king was to corner the goods and raise prices by artificial means to-increase the profit. "That merchandise which is widely distributed shall be centralised and the price enhanced. When the enhanced rate becomes popular, another rate shall be declared."

Yacca panyam pracūram syāt tadekikṛtyārgham  
 āropayet Prāpte'rghe vār'ghantaram kārayet, II, 16  
 The state is also to take freely the advantage of the rise  
 in prices of its merchandise due to bidding among buyers  
 (kṛayasamgharse, II 6)

Thus the state in the conception of the Arthaśāstra  
 plays well the part of the scheming cartel. The transition  
 from free bargain to cornering and price inflation accom-  
 panied the growth of large industries and  
 Big and small trade business in the commercial cities, which  
 kept customers at their mercy.<sup>1</sup> And since the old law still  
 prevailed that a price once fixed holds good, fair or unfair,  
 that a transaction cannot be revoked (Rv IV 29. 9),<sup>2</sup> it  
 weighed more heavily on the customer than on the seller.  
 The saving grace of the system was that it bears no com-  
 parison with the modern American parallel in the sphere  
 of its influence. Almost the whole of rural areas and  
 a large part of urban business were outside the sinister hold  
 of monopolists. Small trade still controlled a big share  
 of the country's business and they in turn were freely  
 exploited by the customers as well as by the big  
 businessmen.

In a free market dominated to a great extent by the  
 'fish-ethics' and with the fragmentary  
 Standard of living and biased data as presented, it is  
 impossible to estimate the cost of living of any class of  
 people with regard to a particular time and place with  
 any approximation to accuracy. We have no price figures for  
 the basic commodities of consumption, none for the staples  
 like wheat, barley or rice. Prices were always and every-  
 where fluctuating and to make the confusion worse

<sup>1</sup> A very early evidence of how fodder grass is cornered by a speculator is in  
 Jataka, I 121

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the transact on of the Jetavana. Later legists qualify this rule. V. XVIII  
 5, Nār IX 2 f

confounded the coins, viz., the *paṇa* or the *kārṣāpaṇa*, the *māṣa* or the *māṣaka* varied in their exchange value from place to place. Only the names of metallic tokens are found to be universal; their ratios are not uniform, their metallic contents differ and hence their purchasing power even for the same actual price. We may only just compare without dogmatising the status of a water-carrier who plans his festive mirth with 1 *māṣaka* or a grass-cutter who sells his bundle for the same price with the weaver of Kāśī whose fabric sells with the king at a fancy price if not exactly at the round number 100,000 *kahāpaṇas*.



## CHAPTER III

### THE METRIC SYSTEMS DISORDER IN MARKET

Fluctuity of weights and measures   Standard weights   Linear measures   Square measures   Fluctuation between places and times

Dishonest dealing   False scales, coins and measures   State as an exemplar   The malpractices and fines   Adulteration   The sinister buyer   From chaos to order

For commodities sold by weight and measurement, price was a still more indeterminate factor. For like coins, weights and measures varied in their standards and ratios from place to place.

References are very common in Pali and Sanskrit literature and inscriptions to standard weights like *pala*, *drona*, *adhaka*, *prastha*, *kharī*, etc., in the measurement of foodcrops and other eatables. A few tables are available giving their metric relations.

TABLE I

4 māgadhakapattā	= 1 kosālapattā	4 kud mba	= 1 prastha
4 kosālapattā	= 1 śhaka	4 prastha	= 1 śhaka
4 śhaka	= 1 dṛpa	4 śhaka	= 1 dṛpa
4 dṛpa	= 1 mīnikā	16 dṛpa	= 1 vēri
4 mīnikā	= 1 khārī		
		20 dṛpa	= 1 kumbha
		10 kumbha	= 1 vaha

—Paramatthajotikā on Sot., p. 123

—Sīratappakā on Sn. I. 180

TABLE II

10 guṇja	=1 māsa	10 māṣa or 5 guṇja	=1 suvarṇamāṣa
10 māṣa	=1 karsa	16 suvarṇamāsa	=1 suvarṇa or karṣa
10 karsa	=1 padārdha	4 karṣa	=1 pala
10 padārdha	=1 prastha	88 gaurasarṣapa	=1 dharana
5 prastha	=1 adhaka	20 tapdula	=1 vajradharaṇa
20 armapa	=1 kharika		

—Arthaśāstra, II 19

8 ratī	=1 māṣā
10 māṣa	=1 suvarṇa

—Sukranīti, II 775 78

Buddhaghosa's table corresponds very fairly with that of the Arthaśāstra. In the Mahābhārata, the *prastha* is a small measure of barley made up of 4 *kulavas* (XIV. 89 32). The small *prastha* of Magadha may well be equated with the *kudumba* or *kulava* and the *kharī* with the *varī*. The table of the Śukranīti differs conspicuously, 1 *adhaka* being equal to 5 *prasthas* instead of 4, and 1 *khārī* equal to 160 *ādhakas* instead of 64. But then the Śukranīti is a much later work and it itself admits that "these measures differ with countries."

The second table of the Arthaśāstra, collated with the Smṛtis (Manu, VIII 134-37; Vis IV. 7-10), stands as

5 guṇja	kṛṣṇala, ratī or gaurasarṣapa	=1 māsa
16 māṣa		=1 karṣa <sup>1</sup>
4 karṣa		=1 pala

Now 1 *guṇja* seed or *ratī* weighs about 1.75 grains

.1 *pala* = 1.75 × 320 grains or 560 grains

<sup>1</sup> According to the Arthaśāstra 88 *gaurasarṣapas* instead of 80 make the weight of a *dharana*, i.e., one *karṣa*. The margin may be explained by the fact that according to the Arthaśāstra, i.e., in the place of its composition, the weight of the white mustard seed was slightly below that of a *guṇja* seed.

The ratio between the *pala* and any of the standards in Table I is nowhere given except for a somewhat confusing statement in the Arthaśāstra that

200 *palas* = 1 *drona* of royal dues (*ayamanam*)

And 187½ *palas* = 1 *drona* of royal sales (*vyavaharikam*)

If the *vyavahārika drona* is the standard *drona* of Table I, then the *ayamāna drona* in which the royal incomes are measured is appreciated by 6·4 per cent. Conversely if the *ayamana* is the real *drona* then the measure used for disposal of king's merchandise is depreciated by 6·25 per cent. Thus

1 *drona* *ayamana* = 200 *palas* =  $560 \times 200$  grs = 16 lbs

1 *drona* *vyavaharika* = 187½ *palas* =  $560 \times 187\frac{1}{2}$  grs = 15 lbs

If the Arthaśāstra clue is accepted, 1 *drona* equates roughly either with 8 srs or with 7½ srs. The shot is not very wide of the mark since during Rāma's prosperous reign cows are said to be yielding 1 *drona* of milk each (*dronadugha*, Mbh XII, 29-58) and 8 srs is an extraordinarily high but by no means impossible yield for a good cow. 1 *adhaka* on this assumption is about 2 srs and 1 *prastha*, ½ a seer. The proportion between the *adhaka* and the *prastha* does not discord with that in a Mathura inscription of Huvīśka's time where an endowment is made to provide the destitute with a daily allowance of 3 *adhakas* of groat (*saktu*), 1 *prastha* of salt, 1 *prastha* of *saku* (?) and 3 *ghataka* and 5 *mallaka* of green vegetables (*haritakalapaka*). The proportion between salt and groat works out at somewhat less than 1/12, allowing a portion of salt for the vegetables.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Such manipulation with metric units to raise the margin of king's profit is freely acknowledged in the Arthaśāstra.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the Munḍakēwari Inscription of Udayasena in Shahabad district of the early 7th century where is recorded a grant of 2 *prasthas* of rice and 1 *pala* of oil to the god Maṇḍakēwara. On our computation, assuming 200 *pala* = 1 *drona*, 2 *prastha* = 25 *pala* and the ratio between oil and rice is 1/25 which is quite satisfactory. But the oil may also have been meant for illumination.

The surmise may therefore be hazarded that the following weight standards, more or less uniformly, prevailed in the Ganges valley in the centuries near about the Christian era

TABLE I

4 kudumba or kulava or magadhaprastha (=1/8 sr )=1 prastha (=1/2 sr )	
4 prastha	=1 adhaka (=2 srs )
4 adhaka	=1 drona (=8 srs )
16 dropa	=1 kharī or varī (=128 srs )

The smaller units, on the basis of the Sastra data may be compiled into

TABLE II

5 guṇja, kṛṣṇala, ratī or gaurasārṣapa (=1 °5 grs )=1 masa (8 75 grs )	
16 masa           ...	=1 karṣa (140 grs )
4 karṣa           .	=1 pala (560 grs )
12 5 pala       ...	=1 prastha (1 lb )

None of these agree with their corresponding names in the Sukraniti. But Śukra saves us by saying that not only these measures differ with countries but even their ratios vary for particular commodities. For example, in the case of an elephant's value 5 *ratī* = 1 *masa* quite in agreement with our Table II. Several other weights are cursorily referred to in the Pali works and in the inscriptions, e.g., the *ammana* (Jat V 297, Mv IV 1 19, Mīl 102),<sup>1</sup> *acchera* (Jat V. 385),<sup>2</sup> *pasata* (Mv VIII 11),<sup>3</sup> *nālaka* (Sn. I 81), *ghataka* and *mallaka* in the Mathura Inscription. With the present state of our knowledge these names remain elusive to us.

<sup>1</sup> *Ammana* of Sanskrit

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Marathi 'acchera' = ½ seer

<sup>3</sup> = 2 *pala* according to Sanskrit lexicographers.

Dishonest dealings ran rampant in the market and false scales, false weights and false measures were the most convenient methods. The glorious days are worth yearning for when merchants did not sell articles with false weights and measures (*kutamānāḥ*, *Mbh* I 61 22), a practice characteristic of the damned Kali age (III 187 53; XII. 228 70). *Tulākūta* and *mānakūta* are in the list of disapproved gifts (*Mil* 279; cf *Vis* LIV 15). Gotama abstains from cheating with *tulā*, *kamsa* and *māna* i.e., with scales, coins and measures (*Dn* I i 10; *An* II 209, V 205 f; *Sn* V 474). In a more comprehensive list, the *Sukranīti* enumerates,—“Deceit by means of false weights and measures, false and counterfeit coins, unscientific medicinal extracts and other preparations, passing off of base metals for genuine and high class things and food adulteration, all these channels of dishonest transactions are to be checked” (I 590-92).

According to the *Aṭhaśāstra* the state itself is to derive some profit by using different weights and measures from those current in the market, i.e., higher ones for royal purchases and levies and lower ones for sales of royal merchandise.

Control of unfair business

But the same work, while setting up a bad example in the state, enters into long philippics against the subjects and prescribes a fine of 200 *pāna* for those who cause to a merchant or purchaser the loss of even  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a *pana* by substituting with tricks of hand (*bastadosenācarataḥ*), false weights and measures or other kinds of inferior articles (*tulāmānāntaram arghavarānāntaram vā dbārakasya māpakasya vā*). The class of merchants who lead in these underhand methods are the goldsmiths adopting false balances (*tulāvisama*), removal (*apasārana*), dropping (*visrāvana*), folding (*petaka*) and confounding (*pinaka*) with several ingenious tricks described in detail under each head (II. 14). Another

practice was to pass bad articles as good ones. "The sale or mortgage of articles such as timber, iron, jewels, robes, skins, earthenware, threads, fibrous garments (*valka*), woollen clothes (*romamayam*) as superior though they are really inferior (*jatamityajutam*) shall be punished with a fine eight times the value of the article" (*ibid*, Yaj. II 245f.). "The sale or mortgage of inferior as superior commodities (*sarabhandam ityasaubhandam*), articles of some other locality as produce of a particular locality (*tajjatam ityatajjatam*), adulterated things (*radhayuktam*), deceitful mixtures (*upadhiyuktam*), dexterously substituted articles to those just sold (*samutparivartitam*) shall be punished with a fine of 54 *pana* and shall make good the loss." "Those who conspire to lower the quality of works of artisans, or to obstruct their sale or purchase shall be fined 1,000 *pana* (*kirusilpinam karmagunapakarsam ajivam vikrayam krayopadhanam va sambhūya samutthapayatam sahasram dandah*)" "Adulteration of grains, oils, alkalis, salts, scents, and medicinal articles with similar articles of no quality (*dhīnya-sneha-ksara-lavana-gandha-bhaisajya-dravya-nām samavarnāpadhane*) is fined with 12 *panas*."

Adulteration was very common in business dealings. Yajñvalkyā repeats (II 244) the injunction of the Arthaśāstra and Vāhaspati lays down "A merchant who conceals the blemish of an article which he is selling, or mixes bad and good articles together, or sells (old articles) after repairing them, shall be compelled to give the double quantity (to the purchaser) and pay a fine equal (in amount) to the value of the article" (XXII 7, 13). Manu censures adulteration of grain (XI 50). In the Jatakas it is a current malpractice (I 220) and

<sup>1</sup> The worst offence in business transactions is to combine into a conspiracy to drive away from the market a competitor by unfair disparagement of his produce or by blocking his sales and purchases. Com

those who mixed good grain with chaff and sold it to a buyer are presented as Tantalus in hell

Ye suddhadhanūām pālapenā missam  
asuddhakammā kayino dadanti VI 110

Sometimes the haggling buyers beat the seller in a sinister bargain in the market place, and are hooked like fishes in purgatory in consequence of their misdeed

The dishonest customer

Ye keci sūthmagatā manussa  
agghena aggham kiyam hīpayanti  
kutenā kutam dānalobbhāhetu  
cannam varicaram vādhaya VI 111

Com —agghena agghanti, tam tam aggam lañcam gahetva  
hattiassadinam va jataruparajataadinam va tesam tesam  
saviññānakammam aviññānakammam aggham hīpenti itaram  
pannasam tehi saddhūm vibhajitva gāhanti

Thus not only the buyer and the seller but sometimes also the middleman or the price expert has his share of the spoils in a market dominated by unscrupulous pursuit of wealth

There could not be any clearer proof of straying into unfair business than the heavy fines imposed by statesmen and law-givers and the damnation of Kali or threat of perdition held out before the public by those who stood for ethical values even in the pursuits of gain. It is because of this widespread anarchy that Manu has to confess that pursuits of trafficking and usury are by themselves a mixture of truth and falsehood (satyavṛta, IV 6). Traces of order were however emerging here and there. Every market had its standard weights and measures as evident from the current lists of names, though they fluctuated from place to place and time to time introducing an element of chaos in

The market from chaos to order

inter-*janapada* commerce. The *Arthaśāstra* conceives of a Superintendent of Commerce (*paṇyādhyakṣa*) to supervise weights and measures and prevent deception with false weights and scales (II. 14). Of the Maurya Empire little is known about the function of "the great officers of state" who "have charge of the market"; but about the fourth body of the municipality of Pāṭaliputra it is definitely said that it superintended trade and commerce, its members having charge of weights and measures (Str. XV. 1. 50).



## CHAPTER IV

### OVERLAND TRADE AND TRADE ROUTES

Inland trade The five road systems (1) North south Pataliputra Sravasti  
 Auxiliary routes Ujjayini Bhrguka cha Rajara (2) Southwest southeast Bhrgu  
 kaccha Hauskambh Timalaputa (3) East west Patalputra Patara (4) East north  
 west Campi Puskalavati (5) Southwest northwest Bhrgukaccha Puskalavati  
 Central Asiatic routes Insecurity

Road making and maintenance Transit River routes Dangers of overland  
 trade Police,—civil and military Difficulties of caravan journey The motive  
 force of gain

The semi-anarchical business conditions did not stand  
 in the way of inter-state commerce The  
 later janapada trade self-sufficiency and isolation of *gamas* and  
*janapadas* were broken by active trade and long highways  
 of commerce intersecting between them The specialisation  
 and localisation of particular industries in particular *janapadas*  
 were sufficient aïge for exchange of their products stimulated  
 by a free market in which profit to the tune of 400 per cent  
 was not an unexpected lot Long lines of caravan plied  
 along the cross-country roads linking into a common market  
 the horse of Sind, the wool of the Himalayas, the muslin  
 of the East and the pearl of the South

The main overland routes resolve into five systems,  
 linking the middle Ganges valley (a) with  
 The road systems the upper Godavari valley and the south-  
 western coast, (b) with the lower Ganges valley and the  
 eastern coast, (c) with the Sindhu and the Indus delta, (d)  
 with the Indus valley and Gandhara, (e) linking the south-  
 western coast with Gandhara Each of these systems had  
 extensions to distant foreign countries to the east and to  
 the west, the first and second by sea, the third and fourth by  
 land, the fifth by land on one side and by sea on the other

(The central route of the first system is what was followed by the pupils of Bāvāri accurately described in the Suttanipāta,—i.e., from Patitṭhāna of Aṭṭaka to Māhissati, Ujjeni, Gonaddha, Vedisā, Vanasabhaya, Kosāmbi, Sāketa, Sāvattī, Setavya and Kapilavatthu. Southward from Kapilavatthu and within the middle Ganges valley this route was extended to Kusinārā, Mandira, Pāvā the city of wealth, Vesālī of Magadha and to the beautiful Rock Temple (Pāsāṇika Cetya), the destination of the party (Vv. 1011-13). It went farther south to Pāṭaligāma (later Pāṭaliputta), Nālanda Rājagaha and probably Gayā. During his last ministering tour from Rājagaha to Kusinārā, Buddha crossed the Ganges at Pāṭaligāma and made eleven haltings besides that at Vesālī, at *gāmas* and *nagaras* (Dn. II. suttanta XVI. 81 ff). Parts of this high-road are noticed elsewhere, e.g., that (addhānamagga) from Kusinārā to Pāvā (Jāt. VI. 19; Dn. XVI. iv. 26) and that between Sāketa and Sāvattī (Mv. I. 66.1) traversed by king Pasenadi of Kosala in relays of seven carriages (Mn. 23; Sn. IV. 373). Probably the great road-construction between Ayodhyā (Sāketa) and the Ganges *en route* the Daṇḍaka forest described in the Rāmāyana (II. 80) covered part of this trunk road.

The main route had its branches and off-shoots. The *niṣāda* country located in the north of Avanti at the foot of the Vindhya had its connecting roads with Kosala and Vidarbha (Mbh. III. 61. 21-23) and with Cedi<sup>1</sup> (61. 131) along which caravans are found plying. The first must have converged with the great Ujjayinī-Ayodhyā road and the other two were possibly linked with this through Ujjayinī. But the foremost ancillary routes of the Pratiṣṭhāna-Śrāvastī

Ancillary routes :  
Ujjayinī-Bhṛgukaccha-  
Tegara.

<sup>1</sup> Located by Pargiter on the bank of the Jumna, south-east from the Chambal towards Karwi. Its capital Śuktimati is identified somewhere near Banda.

system were those connecting its northern and southern portions to the great western seaport of Bhārukaccha. According to the *Periplus* much cotton cloth was brought down to Barygaza from the metropolis of Abiria called Minnagara or the city of the Sakas (*i.e.*, Ujjayini) (47). From Ozene "are brought down all things needed for the welfare of the country about Barygaza and many things for our trade agate and carnelian, Indian muslin, and mallow cloth, and much ordinary cloth" (48). In the south Bhārukaccha was connected by means of cart tracks with the Godavari road leading to Pratiṣṭhāna and Tagara "There are brought down to Barygaza from these places by wagons and through great tracks without roads (because of the hills) from Paethana carnelian in great quantity, and from Tagara much common cloth, all kinds of muslin and mallow cloth and other merchandise brought there locally from the regions along the sea-coast (Eastern coast)" (51). These western extensions of the main road became busy with traffic after Bhārukaccha eclipsed Roruka as the chief outlet of Indian goods for the western world.

The terminus of the eastern route was the seaport of Tāmralipti. It met the Pratiṣṭhāna-Śiāvasti road at Kauśāmbi *near* Gayā and Bārānasi. Traders seen on journey from Benares to Ujjein must have taken this course (*Jāt.* II, 248): "There was much traffic by boat also along the Ganges through the riparian cities of Campā, Pataliputra and Bārānasi (*Jāt.* II 112; IV 5-17, 159; VI. 32-35). The muslins of Vanga, Pundra and Kāśi reached Ujjayini along these land and river routes to be exported abroad from Bhārukaccha. The Tāmralipti road and the lower Ganges must have had feeding routes opening up the interior of Bengal. There is very little concrete evidence of the overland trade to the east of Campā and Tāmralipti."

(2) Southwest south  
east - Bhārukaccha  
Kauśāmbi Tāmralipti

The east-west route ran between Pāṭaliputra and the mouth of the Indus after the city had acquired imperial eminence. It had a nucleus between Magadha and Sovīra from earlier times (VVA. 336, 370) possibly reaching Roṣuka the old seaport situated somewhere on the gulf of Cutch<sup>1</sup> This is the connecting road from *pubbanta* to *aparanta* through which merchants are frequently seen plying in the Jātakas. Between Kosāmbi and Bārānasi it converged with the Kosāmbi-Tāmralipti road. Beyond that its exact course is not known.<sup>2</sup> From the Delta it continued through Iran to the west. Horses from Sīnd and from Iran (Kosmas—quoted in McCrindle) were imported along this road to the Gangetic cities.

The royal road from Pāṭaliputra to the north-west frontier is specifically mentioned by Megasthenes (Str. XV. i. 11). The main body of this road existed long before the rise of the Maurya Empire, in the palmy days of Videha linking Mithilā with Gandhāra and Kashmir (Jāt. III. 365). Passing through the city of Ariṣṭhapura and possibly the Pañcāla city of Kampilya (VI. 419, 463), it crossed the Madra city of Śākala (Mil. 16f.) and met Taxila and Puṣkalāvati in Gandhāra. To the south-east it extended from Mithilā to the Anga city of Campā (VI. 32) thus linking up the farthest east to the north-western borders of India.

Further details and haltings of this Campā-Mithilā-Kampilya-Śākala route may be gleaned from the course taken by the messengers from Kośala to Kekaya in the Rāmāyaṇa. Starting from Ayodhyā along river Mālinī flowing between the country of Aparatāla in the west and the *janapada* of Pralamba in the north, they forded the

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham locates this in Alor of Sīnd

The *addhanamagga* between Mathura and Vasaṇā was probably a part of this system (An II 57); the location of the latter is not known

Ganges at Hastināpur, traversed the Pañcāla country and proceeded westward through the heart of Kurujāṅgala. They next crossed the river Sāradanḍa, entered the city of Kulingā, left behind the twin villages named Tajuvibhavam, crossed the river Ikṣumatī, passed through the region of Bālhika along rivers Vipāsa, Sālmālī, etc., to the city of Girivraja,—capital of Kekaya (II 68. 12ff).<sup>1</sup> This is the same road stretching between Pātaliputra and Kājamgala at the foot of the Himalayas which a *setṭhi* with 500 wagons is seen crossing (Mil. 16 f.) (Horse-dealers from Uttarāpatha travelled by this road to Benares) (Jāt. II. 31, 237). (The Himalayan products of skin, wool, edible spices, precious stones and gold bound for the plains, took this road by its northern branches.)

The fifth and the last road system of the north connected Bhrgukaccha with Gandbāra. The earliest reference to this is in the Periplus where it is found extended up to Puṣkalāvātī (47) whence it had further connexions with Kaśyapapura or Kashmir, Paropanisus or the Hindukush, Kabul and Scythia, bringing the spikenard of these places for export through Barygaza (48). The exact course of this Bhārukaccha-Puṣkalāvātī road is not known.

The east-northwest and the west-northwest road systems met at Puṣkalāvātī and thence they converged to proceed through the Pamirs to Bactria. Raw silk, silk yarn and silk cloth thus found their way from China through Bactria to Barygaza and to Damirica by way of Ganges (64). From Bactria the road coursed through Central Asia to the west. "People have been conveyed from the Oxus through the Caspian into the Cyrus and Indian merchandise can be brought by land to Phasis in Pontus in five days

(5) Southwest-north  
west: Bhrgukaccha  
Puṣkalāvātī

From Puṣkalāvātī  
to Middle East.

<sup>1</sup> Bharata takes a shorter route through the countryside and wild regions presumably because he was in a hurry

at most" (Pliny, VI 17) Aristoboulos also avers "that large quantities of Indian merchandise are conveyed by the Oxus to the Hyrcanian (Caspian) Sea and are transferred from thence into Albania by the Cyrus and through the adjoining countries to the Euxine" (Str XI vii 3) This north western route leading from Gandhara to the Middle East was much preferred to the western route from Indus through Persia to the Levant In the first quarter of the second century B C the Greek invasion from Bactria through the Kabul valley to the Jammu and a century later the Saka invasion from Seistan into the country of the lower Indus took these routes in the north-west and entrenched into a position commanding the great central Indian routes from Ujjaini

The north western route beyond Pushkalavati, because of these constant war and tribal movements, was not very hospitable to international trade The caravan traffic of these regions was not regular but incidental, subject to depredation of savage tribes It was much reduced by Parthian wars in the first century A D<sup>1</sup> giving a tremendous impetus to seaborne trade from Barygaza The road to China was equally unsafe until the subjugation of Turkestan by that empire "The land of this is not easy of access, few men can come from there and seldom" (Peri 64)<sup>2</sup> With the rise of the empire of Kaniska,

Insecurity of the  
Bactrian route

<sup>1</sup> The Parthians had done what they could to control and organise it and to levy tribute on the Roman merchants but they had not controlled it to the eastward The existence of a united power (from 45 A D under Kadoeshe I) in the Indus valley and Afghanistan made possible a regular trade from the Ganges to the Euphrates The rapid growth of such trade is indicated by the coinage of the Indo-Chinese in India struck in imitation of Rome —Schoff p 187

<sup>2</sup> For land routes between China and India see Schoff pp 268 ff Regarding Indo-Chinese trade he observes With the rise of the Kushan dynasty in the north west and their relations towards the former empire in the Chinese border it was natural that the communication by the Turkestan routes should increase While the military success of China did not begin until 73 A D it is known that the Chinese Emperor

trade with Mesopotamia and China became more secure and active

The trunk roads were taken care of and ferries maintained (Mv III 20 f) by the successive Road making and maintenance *janapadas* through which they passed or where they occurred. Bridges are nowhere mentioned. There were shady trees on both sides of the roads, wells for drinking water to which Emperor Aśoka gave much attention (R E II, P E VII),<sup>1</sup> relays of horses of carriages for travellers at intervening stations and rest houses (*avasthagāra*) or *choultries* set up by the charitable millionaires or by village or municipal bodies. In the Maurya Empire they were marked with signboards noting turnings and distances at intervals of 'ten stades' (*ḍṭi* XV 1 5.) The *Ramayana* gives a graphic picture of a bold road-making project. Soil specialists, surveyors and carpenters were requisitioned, road-guards posted at places under construction. Forests were cleared, trees planted in sparsely vegetated places by the highway, ditches filled, hills levelled, tanks excavated and picturesque cities built on both sides of the road (80).

River routes dangers of inland trade { A fair part of the inland trade was carried along the rivers of the Ganges and the Jumna and the large number of tributaries descending into them from the Himalayas and the Vindhya. Boats plied for hire. Sometimes they ran express. Where a water-course could be availed of, the land route was generally dispensed with. It was preferred

Ming Ti (who ruled from 58 to 75) introduced Buddhism into China by the invitation of two Indian Sramanas Kāśyapa Mātanga and Bhārana who arrived in 67 A.D. (*Takshasu Introduction of Iting* p. xvii). Before such an invitation there must have been considerable activity on the part of the missionaries then as now the forerunners of commerce. P. 275

“ mankind has been blessed with many such blessings by the previous kings as by me ”

to sail down from Benares to Tāmralipti despite the caravan-route (Jāt. IV. 15-17). Probably the water-routes were comparatively safer, easier, sometimes quicker and hence less expensive. The roads penetrated through hills and forests which were favourite resorts of beasts, robbers) (Jāt. III. 403) and Yakkhas (III. 200). A caravan straggled in a forest by beasts and robbers is a choice analogy (vyāla-taskara-saṃkīrṇe sārthahīnā yathā vane, Mbh. IX. 3. 13). A caravan of seafaring merchants on their way to sea, while resting in a mountain cave is attacked and exterminated by an infuriated elephant (XII. 169. 1). In the unsettled civil conditions of the times there was no check to these depredations. The Maurya police for a time must have improved the conditions a little and here and there wise statesmanship, alert of the importance of import and export trade came into grips with the problem.<sup>1</sup> But the measures touched only the fringe when effective communications were lacking and whole tribes had to depend on a marauding life. The situation gave rise to the typical institution of the age. Bands of caravan-guards cropped up on the same lines as robber gangs under the command of a *jeṭṭhaka* settling at the entrances of forests and hiring themselves out to passing caravans for safe escort.

Police : civil and professional.

Bodhisatta pañcapurīsasataparivāro aṭaviārakkhikesu jeṭṭhako hutvā aṭavimukhe ekasmim gāme vāsaṃ kappesi. So bhatim gahetvā manusse aṭaviṃ atikkameti. Jāt. II. 335.

A wealthy Brāhmana travelling from the East to the West (i.e., by the road between the Ganges valley and the Indus delta) with 500 wagons hired a convoy who lived at

<sup>1</sup> Eg., in the Arthashastra the office of the *corarajula* whose function includes the escorting of caravans and tracking of robbers,—a tax being levied for the policing on those who benefited by it.



the entrance of the forest at 1,000 pieces. They were defeated and the Brāhmaṇa taken away by a man-eating monster. The men rose and gave a chase to preserve the sanctity of their contract and recovered their paymaster at the peril of their life (V. 471). Another caravan-leader who hired guards for the same amount (*atavipālanam sahaṣṣam datvā*) through a forest was in the same way faithfully defended by the warders against an ogre (V. 22).

A caravan journey was beset with other and more numerous difficulties. These are lucidly set forth in the Jātaka stories.

A caravan merchant when about a night's journey from his destination, after supper relieved the caravan of the surplus wood and water. The pilot sat in the front cart. "But so long had he been without sleep that he was tired out and fell asleep, with the result that he did not mark that the oxen had turned round and were retracing their steps. All night the oxen kept on their way, but at dawn the pilot woke up, and, observing the disposition of the stars overhead shouted out, 'Turn the carts round! turn the carts round!' And as they turned the carts round and were forming them into line, the day broke. 'Why, this is where we camped yesterday,' cried the people of the caravan. 'All our wood and water is gone, and we are lost.' So saying, they unyoked their carts and made a laager and spread the awning overhead; then each man flung himself down in despair beneath his own cart" (I. 108).

The *aparanta* and the Gandhāra routes had to traverse the arid lands of Sind and Western Rajputana. In crossing the desert the caravans are said to travel only in the night and to be guided by a 'land-pilot' (*thalanīyyāmaka*), who just like mariners, kept the night route by astronomical observations (I. 107). The traders knew no obstructions. They nego-

Difficulties of caravan journey

Impetus of gain.

tiated hills, forests and deserts, defied all predators—human, animal and ethereal—not from any spirit of blind adventure but from the love of gain. No wonder they bartered their goods for three or four times their value. The unprotected civil condition reacted on the market. It fits well with free bargain and speculative business.

## CHAPTER V

### SEABORNE TRADE AND TRADE ROUTES

Growth of maritime trade Ship building industry. Tonnage of ships Freight charges Professional crews and pilots. The compass and the crow The seaport or *pattana*

India in international trade Mesopotamia; the Euphrates route, Iran,—imports and exports The Mediterranean or Nile route, Arabia, Socotra, Berbera, Arab monopoly in Red Sea, Egypt, development of Egyptian trade, Indo-Egyptian trade routes Arab Roman rivalry Roman Empire, Indian goods in Roman market, exports and imports Indo-Roman trade curve

The Southern trade The Tamil countries and Ceylon Burma and Indonesia

History of foreign trade The Mauryas The Sakas The Andhras, Kalingas and Vangas The Kusānas

Dangers of the sea Stories of shipwreck The tidal bore at Cutch and Cambay Piracy, the Konkan coast The motive force of gain

[While inland trade moved mainly along roads and rivers, foreign trade was carried across the seas. Evidences of bold sea-voyages come from the earliest literary references of the *Rg-veda*.<sup>1</sup> The early Smṛiti works while laying these under severe strictures for Brāhmanas, only show the futile attempt to arrest a practice which had come to stay. Baudhāyana pre-scribes loss of caste to transgressors (*samudhasamyānam*, II. 1 2. 2) and Manu excludes them from entertainment at the *śrāddhas* (III. 158). But the former admits: "Now the customs peculiar to the North are, to deal in wool, to drink rum, to sell animals that have teeth in the upper and in the lower jaws, to follow the trade of arms, to go to sea" (I. 1. 2. 4), a clear evidence of the commercial activities of the people of Sind and the Punjab across the Indian ocean. Expert

<sup>1</sup> For references see R. K. Mukherji *Indian Shipping* pp. 53-55

voyagers (*samudrayānakusālāh*) are recognised in Manu's code as respectable enough to be authorised to fix the rate of interest on money lent on bottomry (VIII. 157)<sup>1</sup> apparently no stigma attaching to them. In the *Rāmāyana* a boat in mid-sea loaded with heavy cargo is an apt metaphor (IV. 16. 24; V. 25. 14). *Sugrīva* gives instructions to his emissaries, sent in search of *Sītā* to include islands, mountains and sea-ports in the quest (*samudram-avagādhānsca parvatām pattanāni ca*, IV. 40. 25). In a verse of the *Dīgha* merchants are known to "have crossed the ocean drear, making a solid path across the pools" (*ye taranti annavam saram setum katvāna vasiṣṭha pallalām*, XVI. i. 34). In the *Anguttara* voyages lasting for six months are well-known facts (presumably with haltings) made in ships which could be drawn up on shore in winter (*An. IV. 127*). The *Jātaka* verse is sufficiently familiar with "a ship full-rigged for distant seas" to use it as a metaphor (III. 478).

To meet the demands of sailors, ship-building had to be cultivated as a separate industry. Qualities of wood were investigated, technicalities of construction were perfected and the art was studied as a separate branch of science. The *Yuktikalpataru*, a Sanskrit work on certain industrial products of India, makes an elaborate classification of ships of different size and shape giving technical names to each and their parts and quotes from a lost earlier work of *Bhoja* on the various qualities of wood used. In the *Rāmāyana*, *Guha's* boats are fitted with massive bells and banners, well-piloted and well-knit (*yuktavāhāh susambhātāh*, II. 89-17) quite fit to meet the billows and the blasts. During Alexander's invasion, the *Xathroi* ran huge dockyards and supplied to the invader galleys of 30 oars and transport vessels (*Arr. Anab VI. 15*).

<sup>1</sup> *Nirāyaṇa* and *Nandana* give a different rendering of the verse. -

The Mauryas kept the industry a state monopoly and expert builders were maintained as state servants not allowed to take private orders (Str XV 1 46)

The vessels were sufficiently big and strong to carry a heavy cargo Guhr's flotilla carried besides men, chariots, horses, bulls and carts although elephants

Tonnage

had to be swam across The fleet supplied

to Alexander by the ship builders on the Hydaspes whose strength is computed differently by the Greek writers between 800 and 2,000, accommodated 8,000 troops, several thousand horses and vast quantities of supplies The ship which took prince Vijaya to Ceylon had 800 passengers according to the Mahavamsa (Turnour s, 51) The fresco presentation at Ajantā of his landing shews horses and elephants carried in these boats In the Jatakas the tonnage is given at 500 (II 128) and 1 000 (IV 159) passengers, or 7 caravans with beasts (VI 30 ff) In the Samkha Jataka a rescue vessel at sea measures 8 *usabha* × 4 *usabha* × 20 *yatthika*<sup>1</sup> According to Pliny the tonnage is 3,000 *amphorae* (cub ft of water) or 75 tons

There were big ship owners who kept their vessels at ports and took merchants with their wares to their destination

Freight

charging a freight for the transit

(yathā sadbhano naviko pattane

sutthu katasumko mahāsamuddam pavasitta, Mil 359)

Manu lays down the freight charges along rivers but says that there is no settled rate for the seas (VIII 406) showing that here also free bargain reigned supreme and that regulation was futile Sometimes there were joint owners resembling a shipping agency, and Manu lays a law that they are collectively responsible for the damage caused by their fault to passengers' goods (VIII 408 f) In the Arthashastra as well, which provides for the hiring

<sup>1</sup> Nothing is known of these linear measures

out of state vessels to merchants and to fishers of pearls and conch shells, there is a similar law that hire charges are to be remitted and losses made good if the ship foundered from their own defect (II 28) <sup>1</sup> According to Megasthenes the Maurya admiralty let out its ships on hire to professional merchants (Str XV 1 46) bringing a lucrative income to the treasury above the regular port dues and customs duties

There were expert professional pilots who lent themselves for hire to shippers or to merchants In the great seaport

*Crews and pilots* towns were organised guilds or crews under a shipper (niyyamakajetthaka) who

took charge of vessels at the requisition of sea going traders and plied their calling from father to son (Jat IV 137)

It is not known whether the ancient pilots were acquainted with the mariner's compass The Pali word 'maccha-

*The compass and the crow* yantra' has been supposed to be for that instrument and a round device at the prow of a ship in a Borobudur sculpture has been identified to it For ascertaining directions the

mariners observed the stars at night They took direction-giving crows (disakaka) on board, and like the ancient Phœnicians and Babylonians, let them off when they lost sight of land The coast was found in the direction taken by the bird (Jat III 267) That this practice was devised from very early times is apparent from the passage of the Rgveda, I — "Varuna, who knows the path of the birds flying through the air he, abiding in the ocean knows also the course of the ships" This is referred to as a very ancient practice in a well drawn parable

"Long long ago, sea faring traders were wont when they were setting sail on an ocean voyage, to take with them a

<sup>1</sup> It is wrong to call it a law of marine insurance since reparation does not cover damage due to accident

land-sighting bird. And when the ship got out of sight of the shore they would let the land-sighting bird free (*tira-dassim sakenam*). Such a bird would fly to the East, and to the South and to the West and to the North, to the Zenith and to the intermediate points of the compass (*anudisam*). And if anywhere on the horizon it caught sight of land, thither would it fly. But if no land, all round about, were visible, it would come back even to the ship." (Dn. XI. 85; An. III. 367)

Pliny testifies to the prevalence of the custom in the South "In making sea-voyages the Taprobane mariners make no observation of the stars and indeed the Greater Bear is not visible to them, but they take birds out to sea with them which they let loose from time to time and follow the direction of their flight as they make for land." (VI 22).

Ships set sail from the *pattana* or *pattanagūma*, generally a sea-port but sometimes also a river port having direct access to sea. The Malabar and the Koromandel coasts were dotted with such sea-ports catalogued with their busy traffic in the *Periplus* (51ff) "In the north, the most flourishing sea-port was Bharukaccha "in the kingdom of Bhāru" (Jāt. IV. 137) on the estuary of the Narmadā. A little south of it was Sūrparaka "formed by the ocean in the south" at Kaśyapa's command to accommodate Paraśurāma after he had exterminated the Kṣatriyas (Mbh XII 49 67). A third north-western sea-port figures large in the *Periplus* named Barbaricum at the mouth of the Indus. More ancient than these was Roruka, later known as Roruva, the capital of Sovira (Jāt III. 470; Dn. II. 235; Div p. 544). Its exact location is not known but must have been somewhere on the Gulf of Cutch.<sup>1</sup> The Jātakas mention another

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham, however, identifies this with Alor in Sind

western port named Karambiya (V 75) about which no further information is available. What Bhārukaccha was in the West, Tāmralipti was in the East. It commanded the mouth of the Ganges and from there the eastern sea-borne trade of the rich *janapadas* on the valleys of the Ganges and the Jumna. There must have been other prosperous sea-ports on the delta of the Ganges and the Mahanadi serving as the outlets for the specialised industries of Bengal and Orissa. But the overseas trade beyond Tāmralipti both to the East and to the South is a sealed book to us.

About the beginning of the Christian era Indian shipping was sufficiently expanded to reach all the known ranges of the commercial world. The *Indan states in a world family* Periplus is an eloquent testimony to the far-reaching western trade<sup>1</sup>, China and its silk begins to be prominent in Indian literature from this time and the *Milindapañho*, a contemporary work, avers that the ship-owner getting rich with freights paid in a sea-port, embarks in the high seas and sails to Bengal, Malay, China, Gujarat, Kathiawad, Alexandria, Koromandel coast and the East Indies or to any other place where the ships congregate.

‘sadhano nāviko pattane sutthu katasumbo maha-samuddam pavisitā Vangam Takkolam Cinam Soviram Surattam Alasandam Kolapattanam Suvannabhūmam gacchatī aññam pi yam kiñci navāsañcaranam’—359

The earliest trade communication in the west was with Mesopotamia. Keneddy makes out the case for Babylonian

<sup>1</sup> in the age of the Periplus, the merchants of the country round Barygaza traded to Arabia for gums and incense, to the coast of Africa for gold, and to Malabar and Ceylon for pepper and cinnamon and thus completed the navigation of the entire Indian ocean. Vincent *Commerce of the Ancients*, Vol II, p 401



commerce from Bhārukaccha and Sūrpāraka at the latest before the 7th century B. C.<sup>1</sup> Connecting the sea-voyage references in the Rg-veda with the appearance of the word *sindhu* for muslin in a Babylonian list of clothes, Sayce establishes this trade with the Indus valley as early as 3,000 B. C.<sup>2</sup> Later on, this trade diverted mainly to the Dravidians since the Indian names naturalised in the west were Tamil—not Sanskrit or Pali. The Mesopotamian trade is directly referred to in a Jātaka story where traders from India dispose of a crow and other wares after strenuous higgling (III 126 f.) Elsewhere the name of Baveru or Babylon is conventionally thrown in into tales of shipwreck without any particulars. Evidently the sea-route to the Euphrates was still too strenuous to afford regular communication.

Indo-Mesopotamian commerce had three routes,—a sea-route along the coasts of Sind, Gedrosia and Iran, another a mixed water and land-route from Gandhāra and Bactria along the Oxus and across the Caspian and the Black seas and a third overland route from Sind through Iran. Iran was thus the highway of Indo-Babylonian trade—the sea-route passing through its territorial waters, the land-route through its soil. It figures in India's commercial horizon from much earlier times than the 7th century B. C. (A route across the high seas between India and its coasts is supposed to have existed in the days of Buddha from the Chinese legend embodied in the Dīpavamsa relating the founding of a colony from Ceylon on the Persian Gulf. Through the eastern campaigns of Cyrus (558-30 B. C.) the Medo-Persian kingdom was brought into more or less direct contact with India. Probably the Indus valley had a favourable balance

<sup>1</sup> Early Commerce between India and Babylon, J. R. A. S., 1898

<sup>2</sup> Hibbert Lectures

of trade in the 5th century B. C. with Persia and other countries so as to enable it to pay Darius every year 360 Euboic talents of gold dust working out to 9 tons and 5 cwt.

(In the days of the Periplus coastal voyage from Broach to the Euphrates was a regular affair of merchants. To the ports of the Persian Gulf, viz., Apologus and Ommama "large vessels are regularly sent from Barygaza loaded with copper and sandalwood and timbers of teakwood and logs of blackwood and ebony." From these ports "there are exported to Barygaza and also to Arabia, many pearls, but inferior to those of India,<sup>1</sup> purple,<sup>2</sup> clothing after the fashion of the place, wine,<sup>3</sup> a great quantity of dates, gold and slaves." The trade which at present centres at Bahrain has almost the same list of imports and exports.

As the approach to the Euphrates lay through Persian waters, so the way to the Nile and the Nile route Arabia Mediterranean led through the Arabian Agatharcides (177 B. C.) quoted by Greek writers, describes Sabaea (Yemen) as holding the monopoly of the Indian trade. From the great marts of Muza (Mokha), Cana (Bir Ali) and Moscha (2 mi. east of Tiki) on the southern coast, Arab ship owners and sea-farers traded with the Somali coast and with Barygaza "sending their own ships there" in competition with the Egyptian Greeks (Peri 21, 27). They brought from Damirica and Barygaza cloth, wheat and sesame oil and if the season was late they wintered at the harbour of Moscha exchanging those Indian goods for frankincense "which lies in heaps all over the Sakhritic

<sup>1</sup> "This is said still to be the case, the Bahrain pearls being of a yellower tint than those of the Muscat fisheries but holding their lustre better, particularly in tropical climates, and therefore always in demand in India." Schoff

<sup>2</sup> A dye extracted from various species of fishes. Schoff

<sup>3</sup> Date wine and grape wine. Schoff

country" (32). An important halting place between India and Arabia was Dioscorida or Socotra, the island of all races and the centre of international trade not far from the time of Abraham. Egyptians, Arabians, Africans and Indians from the gulfs of Cutch and Cambay met here to exchange their cargo and settle colonies so that at the time of the Periplus the inhabitants were a "mixture of Arabs and Indians and Greeks" The voyagers from Damirica and Barygaza "bring in rice and wheat and Indian cloth, and a few female slaves; and they take for their exchange cargoes a great quantity of tortoise-shell" (30, 31).<sup>1</sup>

Beyond Socotra and Arabia, the Mediterranean route passed along the Somali and Berber coasts. In the Periplus Malao (the Berber country) is described as a great intermediary mart between India and Egypt. ".....From the district of Ariaca across the sea, there are imported Indian iron and steel, and Indian cotton cloth; the broad cloth called *monakhé* and that called *sagmatogéné*, and girdles, and coats of skin and mallow-coloured cloth; and a few muslins and coloured lac" (6). Other imports were Indian copal<sup>2</sup> and macir<sup>3</sup> (8). "And ships are also customarily fitted out from the places across this sea, from Ariaca and Barygaza, bringing to these far-side market-towns the products of their own places; wheat, rice, clarified butter, sesame oil, cotton cloth and girdles, and honey from the reed called *sakkhari*. Some make the voyage especially to these market towns, and others exchange their cargoes while sailing along the coast." (14).

<sup>1</sup> Dioscorida is a corruption from the Sanskrit 'Dwīpa Saklādī ara'—'the island abode of bliss'. For further associations of the island with India and survivals of Indian influences see Schoff, pp. 133 ff.

*Kankamon* Pliny says it is a dye, Dioscorides an exudation used as incense.

<sup>3</sup> An aromatic and medicinal bark

“The important thing to be noted here is that these agricultural products were regularly shipped, in Indian vessels, from the Gulf of Cambay, that these vessels exchanged their cargoes at Cape Guardafui and proceeded along the coast, some southward, but most westward; and that according to 25, Ocelis, at the entrance to the Red Sea was their terminus, the Arabs forbidding them to trade beyond. Between India and Cape Guardafui they apparently enjoyed the bulk of the trade, shared to some extent by Arabian shipping and quite recently by Greek ships from Egypt, on the Somali coast they shared the trade in an incidental way, and they received their return cargoes at Ocelis and shared none of the Red Sea trade, which in former times the Arabs of Yemen had monopolised, but in the days of the Ptolemies the Egyptians had largely taken over”<sup>1</sup>

After Zanzibar the next objective was Egypt. Strabo quotes the story of Posidomos how a certain Indian alone in a ship, picked up by the coast guard of the Arabian Gulf, related that he had started from the coast of India but lost his course and reached Egypt alone, all the companions having perished with hunger. Thereafter he headed a trading mission sent by the Egyptian prince Euergetes II to India “with a good supply of presents, and brought back with him in exchange aromatics and precious stones, some of which the Indians collect from amongst the pebbles of the river, others they dig out of the earth, where they have been formed by the moisture, as crystals are formed with us.” On the return journey of a second voyage he was again carried away by the winds above Ethiopia and thrown in unknown regions (II iii 4).

<sup>1</sup> Schoff

It appears that a voyage between India and Egypt was a risky affair and very rarely undertaken. In Strabo's day Rome had explored the world of Arabian and Indian commerce. "The entrance of a Roman army into Arabia Felix under the command of my friend and companion Aelius Gallus and the traffic of the Alexandrian merchants whose vessels pass up the Nile and the Arabian Gulf to India have rendered us much better acquainted with these countries than our predecessors were. I found that about 120 ships sail from Myos Hormos to India, although in the time of the Ptolemies scarcely any one would venture on this voyage and the commerce with the Indies' (II v 12). The route of the Alexandrian commerce in his day is also given. "It (merchandise) is brought down from Arabia and India to Myos Hormos, it is then conveyed on camels to Coptus of the Thebais, situated on a canal of the Nile and to Alexandria" (XVI iv 24).

Combining the testimony of Strabo and the *Periplus* the Indo-Egyptian route appears to be from Alexandria along the Nile up to Coptus, thence by camel to Myos Hormos, the cluster of islands now Jifatin. From Myos Hormos or Berenice the ships sailed down the Red Sea to Mouza and thence to the watering place of Okelis at the Straits. They made a coastal voyage as far as Cana leaving behind Eudaimon or Aden. From Cana some ships sailed to Barbaricum or to Barygaza, sometimes halting at the island of Dioscorida or Socotra, others sailed direct for the ports of Limyrike (Malabar Coast). From Aromata or Cape Guardafui another route led straight to Malabar. Pliny describes how the Indian route was shortened by successive discoveries through the love of gain, so that "at the present day voyages are made to India every year" (VI 23). The last and the most

important of the series was the discovery of the monsoon ascribed to Hippalus (Peri 57)

But he did a still greater thing, *viz*, freeing the Roman Empire from Arabian monopoly of the Eastern trade by tracing it to its source

Arab Roman rivalry

(The commercial bond between India and Arabia which had lasted at least for 2,000 years and probably much longer was beginning to break under the impact of Rome) With the conquest of Egypt and the establishment of the Ptolemaic Kingdom, the Ptolemies systematically pursued the policy of cultivating direct communication with India and freeing Egypt from commercial dependence on Yemen. There are significant facts bearing testimony to this change. The survival of Arabian control is noticed in the Roman knowledge of cinnamon bark as a product of Somaliland, an Arabian tributary. But cinnamon leaf which was brought later into commerce was known (*malabathrum*, 56, 65) as an Indian and Tibetan product. The 'small vessels' from Mouza to the Nabataean port (19) may be contrasted with the large vessels (10) that traded from Mosyllum to Egypt. Yemen was still wooed with gifts and embassies by Rome (23) but the policy of appeasement was soon abandoned. "It was no part of the Arab policy, whether Hasmonean, Minaean or Nabataean to let Rome cultivate direct relations with India, and as the Empire expanded stronger measures were necessary. Fifty years later than the Periplus, Trajan had captured Petra, and Abyssinia was being subsidised to attack Yemen."

(Pliny in whose time Indian trade was at its highest mentions several Indian imports very often stated with the price at which they were sold at Rome. These may be collected in the following list)

Roman trade  
ports to Rome

Ex

Exports to Rome	Value	Reference
<i>Silk</i> —Chinese and Indian. It became acres with society girls and was too fine to keep their modesty	Worth weight in gold	VI 26, VII 8
<i>Pepper</i> —	6 dinarii per lb	"
<i>Long pepper</i> (adulterated with mus- tard)	15 "	"
<i>White pepper</i>	7 "	"
* Both pepper and ginger grow wild in their respective countries and here we buy them by weight like gold and silver		VII 6
<i>Lycium</i>		
<i>Macis</i>		
<i>Sugar</i> —more esteemed than the Arabian product		"
<i>Ebony</i> —two varieties one ordinary one precious. Imported after the Asiatic conquests of Ptolemy the Great. Egypt was a competitor		VII 8, 9 of Vasil Georgica II 116f
<i>Bdellium</i> —Arabia, Media and Baby- lon were competitors	3 dinarii per lb	VII 9
<i>Costus</i>	5 "	VII 12
<i>Nard</i>	100 "	"
<i>Antonium graze</i>	60 "	"
<i>Crumbled graze</i>	40 "	"
<i>Cardamum</i> —a medicinal herb	3 "	"
<i>Scented Calamus</i> —not properly identi- fied by naturalists. Arabia and Syria were competitors	"	VII 2*
<i>Indigo</i> —a recent import	17 "	XXXIII 4, XXXV 6
<i>Crystals</i> —the Indian kind is best in the East	"	XXXVII 10
<i>Amber, diamond, garnet</i> —highly prized among Indians		"
<i>Opal</i> —India had a monopoly		"
<i>Sardonyx onyx of inferior varieties</i>		"
<i>Carbuncle</i> —Carthage was a competitor		"
<i>Sandastros</i> —Arabia was a competitor		"
<i>Callaina Jasper, amethyst, pederos,</i> <i>obsidian, zirconiacos</i>		"

\* Thus completing her glory as being the great producer of the most costly gems (XXXVII 10) and being "of all countries the most prolific of them" (XXXVII 13)

(The list is not exhaustive. In the *Periplus* the exports from Barbaricum—most of which found their way to Rome are costus, bdellium, lycium, nard, turquoise, lapis lazuli, seric skins, cotton cloth, silk yarn and indigo (39). From Barygaza were sent across spikenard from the Ganges, costus, bdellium, ivory, agate and carnelian, pebbles, lycium, cotton cloth of all kinds—the *monakhe* and the *sagmatogene*,

silk cloth, mallow cloth—a coarse fabric, yarn, long pepper “and such other things as are brought here from the various market towns” (19). Besides this there was the rich export trade of the Tamil ports (51 ff). Among the imports of Barbaricum were “a great deal of thin clothing, and a little spurious,” figured linens (polymita)

of Egypt and Babylon, topaz of the Red Sea island from Egypt, the red coral of

the western Mediterranean—one of the principal assets of the Roman Empire in its eastern trade, storax, frankincense from Arabia, vessels of glass, silver and gold plate and a little wine. Into Barygaza were brought wine, Italian preferred, also Laodicean and Arabian; copper, tin and lead—largely for Saka coinage; coral and topaz; thin clothing and inferior sorts of all kinds; bright-coloured girdles a cubit wide;<sup>1</sup> storax; sweet clover—used for making chaplets, perfumes and medicine; flint glass; realgar (sandarake);<sup>2</sup> antimony; gold and silver coin, “on which there is a profit when exchanged for the money of the country”;<sup>3</sup> and ointment, but not very costly and not much. And for the king there were brought into those places very costly vessels of silver, singing boys, beautiful maidens for the harem, fine wines, thin clothing of the finest weaves and the choicest ointments. Thus Indian imports consisted chiefly of tin, lead, glass, amber, steel, coral, coarse clothing, topaz and storax and frankincense

from Arabia while her exports were iron, skins, wheat, rice, butter, oil, sugar, silk and muslin, wool and furs, wood, tortoise shell, pearls, large variety of drugs, dyes, aromatics,

Balance of Indo-Roman trade.

<sup>1</sup> Probably for the Bhils who worked the carnelian mines then, as now, Schoff.

<sup>2</sup> Red sulphide of arsenic, used for medicine.

<sup>3</sup> “The profit on the exchange was due to the superiority of the Roman coinage to that of India, which latter was still crude, of base metal (bronze or lead), for which even the bullion (copper, tin and lead) was imported,” Schoff.



edible spices and precious stones. The balance of trade was completely in India's favour. In vain Pliny raised his voice against the heavy exploitation of his country's wealth. "At the very lowest computation, India, the Seres and the Arabian peninsula drained from our empire yearly 100 million sesterces,<sup>1</sup> so dearly we pay for our luxury and our women (XII 18).

To make a brief *resume* of the history of the Indo-Roman trade. Prior to Emperor Augustus the western trade was carried on mainly by way of Egypt through the ports of Berenice and Myos Hormos to Alexandria. The bulk of this trade took the sea route. The trade was at its highest between Augustus and Nero in the first century A.D.—stimulated by the discovery of the monsoons. Spices and perfumes, pearls and precious stones, silks and muslins were the favourite Indian wares in Roman market. The chief of these exports were spices and precious stones as appears not only from Pliny but also from the discovery of Roman coins from the sources of supply of these commodities.<sup>1</sup> Between Nero and Caracalla (217 A.D.) there was a lapse. Instead of luxuries there was a limited trade in necessities such as cotton fabrics and the trade was mainly with the north where Roman coins of this period have been found.<sup>2</sup> This decline coincides with a reaction in Rome to plebian habits against the luxury and dissipation of the higher classes,—the case for which Pliny advocated so strongly.

The fact of the southern and eastern trade does not appear with so much glamour and detail. The objectives of southern trade were the Tamil countries and Ceylon carried from Bharukaccha and Sūrpūaka in the west and from Tamralipti

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to £ 70,000

<sup>2</sup> See Sewall *Roman Coins found in India* J R A S., 1901 pp 591ff

and the ports of Bengal and Kalinga in the east. The exploration of the island of Ceylon and its conquest is ascribed to prince Vijaya from Bengal on the very day when Buddha attained *nirvāṇa*.<sup>1</sup> (In the Jātakas Ceylon is known as the *nāga* island, i.e., the island inhabited by people called the *nāgas* or dragons. It lay on the route from Bhārukaccha to the East Indies (III. 183). Mariners from Benares, plying down the Ganges, sail and touch at this island (*ibid*). The Tamil countries were reached both by land and by sea ) On the way from the northwest coast to the East Indies was Manimekhalā<sup>2</sup> the divine name of Tamil, famous in the north for its efficient shipping. In stories of shipwreck of northern voyagers, the divinity comes to rescue with magic ships of titanic size (8 *usabha* × 4 *usabha* × 20 *yaṭṭhika*) with three masts and bedecked all over with sapphire, gold and silver (IV 15ff. VI. 25). The tradition at least shows that the southerners were more expert sea-farers and their ships were more seaworthy and of larger size. The Periplus also testifies that the Colas and the Pāndyas sent their wares to the Ganges in large ships called Colandia. Their ports were visited in turn by ships "from the north"—evidently from the Ganges and Bengal. From Tamil literary evidence (Paddi-nappalai, 1- 0) it appears that from the North were exported to the Cola market of Kāveripaddinam, horses,—sent from Sind and the Punjab, gold and precious stones from the northern mountains, and coral from the eastern seas.

The main outlet of northern merchandise for the South  
 Burma and Indonesia. and the East was Tāmralipti (Tamluk).  
 Some of its wares were even shipped to  
 the West. "Through this place are brought mala-

<sup>1</sup> The story of the Ceylonese chronicles is half mythic and half historical and the date is absolutely unreliable. All that we may conjecture is that it is a pre Maurya episode.

<sup>2</sup> See Krishnaswami Aiyangar - *Manimekhalā in its Historical Setting*

bathrum (from the eastern Himalayas), Gangetic spikenard (the true spikenard from the Himalayas) and pearls, and muslins of the finest sorts, which are called "Gangetic" (Peri 63). It was the nearest seaport for approaching Pegu, Malay, Sumatra, Java, Cambodia and even China and Japan by sea. In the Jātakas, Suvannabhumi—a generic name for the East Indian islands, is the regular field of mercantile adventure. Unlike the traders of the Gulf of Cambay who dealt with the Western world, the mariners of Andhra, Kalinga and Bengal did not rest with sending their cargo to the markets of Indonesia. They made bold enough to embark across the seas and colonise *en masse*. Traces of their adventure survive in the remnants of Indian civilisation widely scattered over Burma, Malaya, Sumatra, Java and Cambodia—the farthest outpost of ancient Indian culture. The history of the e momentous maritime exploits—full of life and vigour, and eloquent of strong socio-economic forces let loose in the mother country, is entirely a lost story—lost like the great sand buried cities of Khotan. 1

( In the third century before Christ, the Maurya Empire stands among an international family with Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia and Epeus, cultivating diplomatic relations and sending missionaries to preach the gospel of Dhamma (R Es II, XIII). Centuries of international trade had built up the highway for this political and religious intercourse. The influx of foreigners in the metropolis was so great at the time of Megasthenes that the municipal board had to set apart a committee to take care of them. The generals in the company of the Macedonian conqueror were struck by the din of the great dockyards of the Punjab tribes. The Mauryas were astute enough to monopolise this industry and maintain a strong admiralty employing its fleet both for naval and commercial purposes.

History of foreign  
trade The Mauryas

The Sātavahanas who were in possession of the western ports of Bharukaccha and Sorpāraga and who equipped them with quadrangular rest houses (*catusalavasadbapratisrayapradena*, Nasik C I 10 iv) must have pursued a vigorous commercial policy. The Kānheri Caves executed in their time contain sculptural representations of voyages through sea. They maintained a regular service of pilotage in the rough waters of Cambay (Peri 44 46). The Periplus gives a passing glimpse into how great a part this commercial interest played in the affairs of state. Sandares,<sup>1</sup> who ruled over the prosperous trading communities of the western sea-board took possession of Kāliena (Kalyana) formerly belonging to the House of Sarganes the Elder (*Satakarni*), subjected its trade to the severest restrictions, so that if Greek vessels entered its port even accidentally, they were seized and sent under escort to Barygaza—evidently the seat of paramount power (52). Presumably it was an attempt to divert the overseas trade of Kalyana and centralise it at Bhārūkakcha.

The Andhras were veteran sea-farers pursuing their trade from the eastern coast. Even their coins belonging to the second and the third centuries A D bear the device of ships "full rigged for distant seas". The Colas, the Kalingas and the people of Vanga, Pundra and Samatata were their rivals in eastern trade. The kings of Vanga had powerful naval forces and are said in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamśa* to be trusting in their ships.

Under Kaniska, when the Kusana and the Roman empires marched almost contiguous, Roman trade was at its highest. References to Romaka in the *Mahābhārata* and in the astronomical *siddhantas* originate from this period. Rome was alive to the import-

<sup>1</sup> *Satavahana*—says Lassen

ance of Yueh-Chi alliance against the Parthians and Sassanians and as controller of the great overland trade-route through Afghanistan between the East and the West. "How close was the friendship is shown in A.D. 60 by the Roman general Corbulo escorting the Hyrcanian ambassadors up the Indus and through the territories of the Kushans or Indo-Scythians on their return from their embassy to Rome."

(Yet the sea was full of danger (samuddo anekādinavo) and it was love of gain that inspired man to defy them. In a mother's estimation, as regards her son intent on a voyage, these risks far outweighed the expected returns (Jāt IV 2). Shipwreck is a common catastrophe in the Jātakas (II 103; III 26; V. 75). The vagaries of the weather and of the waves were not sufficiently explored. Shipwreck is often due to planks giving way (Jāt VI 34, bhūna-naukaṇvārnave, Mbh. VIII 2 20) caused by cataracts or tidal bores or by running a hidden rock or coming in the field of a magnetic rock," as for example the Maināk which earned a notoriety in the Epics for its heavy toll of merchant men. When dangers go out of control, men fall into myths. Accordingly the sea, due to insufficient acquaintance, became associated with mythical horrors and for their counterpart, with mythical charms. It is infested with goblins and monsters and nagas devouring shipwrecked persons and it abounds with gold, diamond and nectar, the very elixir of life (Jāt II 127 ff., III 345; IV 139 ff.; Mbh I 20-22).

<sup>1</sup> R. K. Mukherj, *op cit*, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> This possibly is the reason why cane fibres instead of iron strips were used to join the planks. An IV, 127. Hare renders 'vettabandhanabaddhaya' as 'rigged with masts and stays'. The explanation of Buddhagosa does not allow this rendering.

Even in the days of the Arthaśāstra ocean traffic was far more dangerous than land traffic (II 16 and Com ) And these dangers were not all imaginary The Periplus gives a realistic insight into them The gulfs of Cutch and Cambay were great danger zones "Those who are drawn into the Gulf of Baraka (Dwāraka) are lost; for the waves are high and very violent, and the sea is tumultuous and foul, and has eddies and rushing whirlpools The bottom is in some places abrupt, and in others rocky and sharp, so that the anchors lying there are parted, some being quickly cut off, and others chafing on the bottom" (40)

A glimmering glimpse is obtained why the ancient seaport of Rorua goes out of the picture and Barbaricum, farther west and north, comes as a parvenu

Due to the extreme intensity of ebb and flow in the Narmada, entrance and exit of vessels in Bharukaccha were very dangerous to the inexperienced The Periplus vividly describes the vagaries of the tidal bore (45 f ) Because of the difficulty of navigating in the Gulf of Cambay and the mouth of Narmada, the state maintained a regular service of pilotage, under which incoming vessels were met at least 100 miles down from the port "Native fishermen in the king's service, stationed at the very entrance in well-manned large boats. . . go up the coast as far as Syrastrène, from which they pilot vessels to Barygaza And they steer them straight from the mouth of the Bay between the shoals with their crews, and they tow them to fixed stations, going up with the beginning of flood, and lying through the ebb at anchorages and in basins These basins are deeper places as far as Barygaza, which lies by the river about 300 stadia up from the mouth" (44)

The coastal route of Arabia was discarded as unsafe (20) The story of Posidonios repeated by Strabo is another concrete instance of the perilous nature of a long sea voyage

Not all the perils came from nature. The arch-peril of maritime commerce was piracy. The

Piracy

myths of man-eating sea-monsters in the Jatakas may be traced to this source. For the name of *naga* applies to both a pirate and a monster. According to the Kashmirian poet Ksemendra, these *naga* pirates were active in the Eastern waters in the days of Asoka. Traders waited upon the Emperor and complained that all their ships and treasures were plundered by these people and that if the conditions ran as they were, they would change their pursuits resulting in fall of revenue (Bodhi Kalp, Pall 73).

Konkan coast

The worst piratical rendezvous in the Indian ocean was the Konkan coast, entrenched in its numerous creeks and bays which afforded safe harbourage to their cruisers. They fed upon the richly freighted merchantmen that frequented this place. According to Ptolemy the Pirate Coast extended from the neighbourhood of Somylla (Chaul, 23 mi S of Bombay) to Nitra (Mangalor) (17). The Periplus (53) and Pliny refer to the pirates who infested this place and the latter adds that merchant vessels from Egyptian ports carried as a precaution companies of archers on board. In Ptolemy's time these pirates felt the strong hand of the state. The father of the Red Chera destroyed "Kadambu of the sea coast" and thus the coast was freed from their depredations between 80 and 222 A.D. But Arab Berber predators still dominated African and Arabian coasts, "men of piratical habits, very great in stature and under separate chiefs for each place" (Peri. 16, 20). Such was the nuisance and havoc they created, that the author of the Arthashastra has to enjoin that pirate ships (*himsrika*) are to be destroyed at sight (II 28).

So the vision dawns before our eyes of ancient Indian mariners even from the Vedic times braving

The urge for gain

unknown perils across fathomless depths and under limitless skies. The Indian teak excavated at Ur

in Sumer, the Indian frescoes worked at Borobudur in Java, the Indian inscription at the Horiuzi temple in Japan give an inkling of the magnitude and duration of their exploits<sup>1</sup>. As the roads between Puskalāvati and Tamralipti hummed with cracking wheels, the roaring waves of the Indian ocean were broken by the rhythmic splashes of oars, the very emblems of patient and persevering search for gain gingered up by an unconquerable spirit of adventure. We feel our sojourn in a world of reality, a material world of the stock and the bourse where *artha* fulfils its great destiny in human life—where empires come to measure arms to secure commercial advantage, where overseas trade paves the path for conquests of Dhamma and conquests of arms, where the merchant, the missionary and the military march one after another in an automatic cycle,—all originating from the much derided mercantile gospel ‘*yathartham labhate dhanam*’—‘profit according to investment’.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the present deterioration in Indian shipping. The share of Indian companies is 13 p c of coastal traffic and 2 p c of ocean borne trade of India while formerly, both were entirely Indian.



## CHAPTER VI

### STATE LEVIES AND STATE CONTROL ON COMMERCE

Intervention of State    Taxation of commerce

Practice    the *śulka*    protection    moderation    reduction and remission    assignment of toll receipts    subsidy and loan    Realisation of toll    suppression of smuggling    State monopolies    Control by the Sakas    protection    Control by the Mauryas, rigorous and drastic

Theory    principles of assessment    The *sannidhāt*    Encouragement of import    The charges    The *śilka* or toll rates    The *daradaya* or gate due    The *raṭṭānt* or road cess    Realisation of dues and suppression of smuggling    The *pranaya* or ben volence    The *raja-kartta* or forced labour    Port dues    Monopolies    Price fixing    Control of buying and selling    From free to regulated economy

(As trade and commerce expanded and became the strongest economic factor in urban life it called forth in an increasing measure the intervention of the state. Its first concern was of course to derive a revenue from the new income, its next, to monopolise those trades and industries which yielded best profits or which affected vital interests of state. The exercise of these very rights drew it into further and further interference. The evils of competition, unfair dealings, deception of customers, smuggling and deleterious machinations of big business all combined to intensify the anarchy in the commercial world. The state was faced with the growing problems of restoring order. For on the stability of the market depended the stability of its finance.)

Assessment of commercial wealth was run on the same lines as assessment of agricultural produce. Revenue from the new income    It was the same principles of taxation applied to the different *varṭtas*. The same social contract of protection and payment between the sovereign and the subjects is the theoretical basis of

both the systems. The same moderation in assessment and realisation of revenue is the prescribed canon in both. The state had its own commercial concerns as it had its agricultural land and cattle. Toll dues were occasionally remitted and sometimes transferred as in the case of land revenue. Lastly the doctrine of emergency was a convenient tool in the hand of the state for the best use and worst abuse.

(As the *bhāga* was the customary revenue on land, the *śulka* was the toll on merchandise levied for the protection it received from the state (Mbh XII 71 10).<sup>1</sup> Among the vauntings of a king how he stands above his kin is "You know Uposatha, merchants coming from many a realm prosper here and I look to their welfare and protection."

atho pi vanijā phitā nānaratthāto agatā  
tese me vihitā rakkā evam janahā Uposatha'ti

Jat IV 135

In a kingless country, merchants from afar with a varied cargo cannot safely cross the roads

na arajake janapade vanijo dūragaminah  
gacchanti ksemamaddhvānam bahupanyasamacitāh

Rām II 67 11

From Narada's admonition to Yudhisthira it would seem that the king was not only to treat merchants with consideration in his capital and kingdom but also see that buyers or his officers in the zeal to encourage import did not tempt merchants with high hopes or false pretexts to bring their goods (Mbh II 5 115)

<sup>1</sup> In the Rg veda *śulka* means price. Muir traces the sense of tax in a passage in the Atharva Veda, III 29 3. See Macdonell & Keith *Vedic Index* Vol II, p 337

Protection and encouragement of commerce meant that taxation did not fall heavy on dealings of exchange. Moderation is the keynote of Indian financial speculation—“Let him not cut up his own root (by levying no taxes) nor the root of other (men) by excessive greed, for by cutting up his own root (or theirs) he makes himself or them wretched (Manu, VII 139). “Let him also lay just duties on other marketable goods according to their intrinsic value without oppressing the traders (anupabatyā, Baudh I 10 18 15). An admonition in the Jātaka elaborated in the commentary shows how the king's exchequer fails as a result of excessive taxation of citizens engaged in buying and selling transactions (y yutta kayavikkaye V 243). Nārada warns Yudhiṣṭhira that it should be his anxious care to see that only such dues as prescribed in the canon (yathoktam) and no arbitrary imports are realised from the merchants who come to his territories from distant lands impelled by the desire of gain (Mbh II 5 114).

Moderation sometimes urged reduction or complete remission of tolls and duties. The birth of an heir to the throne was a suitable occasion for such a gesture. On the occasion of Mahāvira's birth prince Siddhartha released customs, taxes, confiscations and fines (Jaina Kalpasutra, 102). Rare products useful for the interests of state might be freed from duties to encourage their import. Ho-mas writes from the sixth century that the king of Śielediba (?) imported his horses from Persia and the traders supplying were exempt from customs dues. Toll receipts might be transferred like any other revenue. The king might make a bequest of them to whoever might please his fancy (Jat VI 347).<sup>1</sup> Or

<sup>1</sup> The Inscription of Divala of Hastinapur at Bājpur assigns  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the toll proceeds to Jina and  $\frac{1}{2}$  to a temple goddess. Verse 17.

sometimes the king might choose to pay his officers by the assignment of the receipts as would appear from Nārada's speech (yathoktam avahāryanti śulkaṃ śulkopajivibhiḥ).

(An enlightened commercial policy did not stop at moderate assessment and remission. It sometimes encouraged trade and industry by direct subsidy.) The state gave not only civil but also economic protection. Pursuant to the financial maxim that mitigation of want will increase revenue, a chaplain advises a king whose realm is harassed and harried by dacoits that taxation or punishment are not the right redress. "Whoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to cattle and the farm, to them let his Majesty give food and seed-corn. Whoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to trade, to them let his Majesty give capital. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to Government service (rāja-porise) to them let his Majesty give wages and food" (Dn. V. II). Peace and order depended on the prosperity and satisfaction of subjects all around and the lesson is constantly harped upon to bring round errant kings. (Nārada's admonition to Yudhiṣṭhira suggests the subsidisation of merchants and craftsmen as a healthy state policy (Mbh. II. 5. 71). King Siddhārtha's concessions to his subjects on the occasion of Mahāvīra's birth included cancellation of debts implying the same benevolent practice of advancing loans to agriculture and business.)

A city officer fixes the toll for merchants (vāṇijānaṃ sumkāni, Jāt. IV. 132). As regards the rates no evidence is forthcoming. (The tolls were collected on incoming goods at the four gates of the city (catūsu dvāresu sumkaṃ, VI. 347) (at the customs house) (sumkatthāna, Vin. III. 4; Mil. 359)<sup>1</sup>

Realisation of toll  
dues : smuggling.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the *mandapikā* or customs house in later inscriptions like the Grant of Śivaskandavarman and the Baijnath Prasasti.

attached to each gate. Collection was strict and for an attempted evasion the whole wagon was seized by the government. This is elaborated in the commentary on Buddha's parable in the Anguttara nikāya of 'the payer of taxes on merchandise' (*sumkadāyikam eva bhandasmim*, I. 53) "Just as one liable to pay duties on goods he has bought and 'smuggled through the customs' is overwhelmed by his guilty act, and it is he who is the guilty one not the Government, not the Government officials. He who smuggles goods through the Customs House is seized, cart and all, and shown to Government."

The most lucrative industries, those which commanded the best market abroad or those which involved the vital interests of the state, were kept under its monopoly. Medhatithi illustrates Manu VIII 399 by citing saffron in Kashmir, fine cloth and wool in the East, horses in the West; precious stones and pearls in the South, and elephants everywhere. We have already seen that horses and elephants, particularly the latter, were very often royal preserves.<sup>1</sup> As for pearls the Periplus says that the fishery at Colchi was worked by condemned criminals and regarding Argaru "at this place and nowhere else are brought the pearls gathered on the coast thereabouts"<sup>2</sup> In the Śantiparva (69-29), the Arthśāstra (II. 12) and the Karle and Nasik Inscriptions mines and salt centres appear as state monopolies. According to Pliny, from the salt-range of Ormenus between the Indus and the Hydaspes, "a greater revenue accrues to the sovereign of the country than they derive from gold and pearls" (XXXI 7)<sup>3</sup> The mines and fisheries were profitably worked by the state by means of free convict labour. Sometimes the state extended its

<sup>1</sup> See Bk I Ch V

<sup>2</sup> Cf. E I, II 13—Nagpur Stone Inscription

<sup>3</sup> Reminiscences of such monopolies are observed in the royal monopolies in manufacture or sale of salt, sugar, tobacco matches, etc., in many of the Indian Native States

control over the whole foreign trade and strictly regulated the distribution of imports as for example the Scythians of the west in the first century A.D. "The ships lie at anchor at Barbaricum but all their cargoes are carried up to the metropolis by the river to the king" (Peri. 39). Sandares (?) who conquered Kalyāna subjected its trade to severe restrictions and diverted the Greek trade to Bhārukaccha, his chief trade mart (52).

The Sakas not only controlled the overseas trade. They gave it necessary protection. They made Bhārukaccha a safe harbour against the extreme vagaries of the tidal bore at the estuary of the Narmadā by engaging native fishermen "in well-manned large boats" to steer safely the incoming vessels (Peri. 44-46). The kings had to protect overseas trade against the depredations of pirates a function which the father of the renowned Red Chera so eminently fulfilled by subduing the Kadambas in the Konkan coast. Aśoka could not brush aside the complaints of the eastern traders suffering under the marauding activities of the Nāgas, although his methods of redress were different.

In the empire of Candragupta, trade both internal and external, received the vigilant attention of the state and of the municipalities. Without going into details, Megasthenes gives a very precise information on the nature of municipal control. "Of the great officers of state, some have charge of the market....." and then of the municipal bodies in Palibothra, ".....The members of the first look after everything relating to the industrial arts." The second attend to foreigners, the third register births and deaths "with the view not only of levying a tax,<sup>1</sup> but also in order that births and deaths among both high and low may not escape the cognizance of government. The fourth class superintends trade and

Under the Mauryas

<sup>1</sup> A poll tax ?

commerce. Its members have charge of weights and measures, and see that products in their season are sold by public notice. No one is allowed to deal in more than one kind of commodity unless he pays a double tax. The fifth class supervises manufactured articles, which they sell by public notice. What is new is sold separately from what is old, and there is a fine for mixing the two together. The sixth and the last class consists of those who collect the tenths of the prices of the articles sold. Fraud in the payment of this tax is punished with death.....In their collective capacity they have charge.....also of matters affecting the general interest, as. ....the regulation of prices, the care of markets, harbours and temples" (Str. XV. i. 50).

Thus false weights and measures were reduced, adulteration checked, prices kept in equilibrium, the underhand machinations of the black market brought under control, smuggling and evasion of king's dues<sup>1</sup> dealt severely. The control was no doubt rigorous and drastic; but nothing short of extreme measures could resolve the prevailing anarchy in the business world.

The Arthaśāstra and the Dharmaśāstras dilate further the principles and rates of assessment. The *śāstra* data by themselves cannot be accepted as authoritative evidences of actual economic conditions. But they reflect the progress of financial thinking and the growing complexities and recurring crises in the market which kings were called upon to deal and on which law-givers had to formulate their views.

"After (due) consideration the king shall always fix in his realm the duties and taxes in such a manner that both he himself and the man who does the work receive their

<sup>1</sup> The 'tithes' is not to be taken literally but in the more elastic sense in which it was used in the West.

due reward" (Manu, VII. 128). The Śukranīti enjoins that a duty is levied only when the buyer or seller is a gainer (IV. ii. 218 f.). "Having well considered (the rates of) purchase and (of) sale, (the length of) the road, (the expense for) food and condiments, the charges of securing the goods, let the king make traders pay duty."

Vikrayam krayam adhvānam bhaktam ca saparicchadam  
Yogakṣemam ca samprekṣya vanijām kārayet karāṇ

Manu, VII. 127; Mbh. XII. 87. 13.

The tax on internal industries, the Śāntiparva continues, is fixed after taking into account the outturn, receipts and expenditures and the state of the arts—*utpattiṃ dānavṛttiṃ ca śilpaṃ samprekṣya cāsakṛt*.

In the Arthashastra the *sannidhātṛ* realises commercial dues as the *samāharṭṛ* collects agricultural dues. This officer is to observe the fluctuations in demand and in the prices of internal products and foreign imports so that the scale of duties might be revised periodically. Import of foreign goods is to be encouraged. Foreign merchants coming by water or by land are to be favoured with remission of taxes so that they may keep some margin. (*Parabhūmijam panyam anugrahenā' vahayet. Nāvika-sārthavāhebhyaśca parihāram āyatikṣamam dadyāt*). They cannot be sued for debts (II. 16)

These are concessions under special circumstances. The payments that a visiting merchant habitually makes are :

1. Śulka—toll or customs dues,
2. Vartanī—road cess,
3. Ativāhaka—conveyance cess,
4. Gulmadeya—levies at military stations, presumably for protection against brigandage,
5. Taradeya—ferry charges,



6. Bhakta—subsistence to the merchant and his followers,

7. Bbāga—share of profit.

—II. 16, 35

The toll covers both ingress and egress (niṣkrāmyam praveśyam ca śulkaṁ) of merchandise—external (bāhyam, i.e., arriving from country parts), internal (ābhyantaram) or foreign (ātithyam). The scheduled rates of import duty are :

Toll rates.

1. Common goods 1/5 of value.
2. Flower, fruit, vegetables, roots, bulbs, *pallikya* (?), seed, dried fish and dried meat 1/6 „
3. Conch-shells, diamonds, jewels, pearls, to be fixed by corals and necklaces experts acquainted with time, cost and finish.
4. Fibrous garments (*kṣauma*), cotton cloths (*dukula*), silk (*krimītāna*), mail armour (*kankaṭa*), sulphuret of arsenic (*haritāla*), red arsenic (*manaśśilā*), vermilion (*linguluka*), metals (*loha*), colouring ingredients (*varnadhātu*), sandal, aloe (*agaru*), pungents (*kaṭuka*), ferments (*kinva*), dress (*āvaraṇa*), wine, ivory, skins (*ajina*), raw materials for *kṣauma* & *dukula*, carpets (*āstarana*), curtains (*prāvaraṇa*), products yielded by worms (*krimijāta*) and wool of goat and ship 1/10 to 1/15 of value.
5. Cloths (*vastra*), quadrupeds, bipeds threads, cotton, scents, medicines, wood, bamboo, fibres (*valkala*), raw

hides (carma), clay pots, grains, oil	
(sneha), soda (kṣāra), salt, liquor	1/20 to 1/25
(madya), cooked rice	of value.

The rate of 1/6 for group 2 is repeated in the Agni-purana and in the Smṛtis (Gaut. X. 27; Manu, VII. 130-32; Viṣ. III. 24f.)<sup>1</sup> with further additions in the list, viz., medicinal herbs, honey, grass, firewood, scents, spices, leaves, skins, wickerwork, stonework clarified butter, etc. On cattle (paśu), the import duty is not 1/-0 or 1/25 but 1/50 and so also on gold (hiranya).<sup>2</sup> Import of gold is encouraged for obvious reasons. The standard rate on imports as well as on all sales is also much lower than 1/5. The king is to take 1/20 of the profits upon the value fixed on each saleable commodity by experts in the settlement of tolls and duties and of prices (Manu, VIII. 398; Gaut. X. 26). This of course excepting grain and applies to both Vaiśyas and Śūdras (Manu, X. 120).<sup>3</sup> The Śukranīti gives another schedule.

Minerals: Gold, gems, glass and lead	...	1/2 of profit
Silver	...	1/3 "
Copper	...	1/4 "
Zinc and iron	...	1/6 "
Grass, wood, etc.	...	1/3, 1/5, 1/7, 1/10, 1/20 of profit—IV. ii. 233 38.

Clearly the author of the Arthaśāstra, an economist statesman, is a much more rigorous protectionist than the

<sup>1</sup> Haradatta reads the passage in Gautama and Viṣṇu as indicating 1/60 which is improbable.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Agnipurāṇa 1/5 or 1/6. For the meaning of 'hiranya' see *supra*, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> This according to the rendering of Nārāyaṇa and Nandana. Medhātithi, Govindarāṇa, Kuṭṭūka and Rāghavānanda give a different interpretation, viz.—on the profits of gold and cattle the king may take in necessity 1/20 instead of 1/50 if the commodity values more than 1 kārṣaṇa. The former is more acceptable for X. 120 and VIII. 398 both refer to all commodities except grain while VII. 130 to cattle and gold only.

law givers of the canon } It should be observed moreover that while the assessments of the former are made on value, those of the latter are charged on profit which falls much lighter on the traders

According to Vishnu the import duty is generally fixed at 10 p c (III 29, Baudh I 10 18 14) and the export duty at 5 p c of the price of the articles (III 30) The rate of duty reflects the high rate of profit derived by traders

Within the *śulka* the Arthasastra includes another charge, viz, the gate dues (*divaradeya*) which are 1/5 of toll and which may be remitted if circumstances necessitate such favour (*divaradeyam sulkapancabhaga anugrahikam va yathadesopakaram sthapyet*) Commodities shall never be sold where they are produced (II 22) <sup>1</sup>

The *vantani* is realised by the *antapala* or boundary officer He is a police officer giving protection to caravans at the danger zones of the borders Kautilya's teacher is very sceptic of the

Road cess

<sup>1</sup> From much later inscriptions come toll lists existing in practice and not in ideas alone

- 2 *palikas* from every *ghataḥakupa* of clarified butter and oil
- 2 *rimśopakas* per *mansema* for every sh p
- 50 leaves fr m every *clollika* of leaves brought from outside the town
- Alwar 960 A D (E I, III 36)
- 1 *rupaka* for each 20 loads (*pratala* and or *pot*) a) carried for sale
- 1 *rupaka* on each cart filled whether going from or by the village)
- 1 *karga* for a *ghadā* at each oilmill
- 13 *clollikas* of betel leaves by the Bhattas
- pellaka pellaka* (?) by the gamblers
- 1 *adhaka* of wheat and barley from each *araghatta* (well with water wheel)
- 5 *palas* for *peḍḍā*
- 1 *rimśopaka* for each *bhara* (2000 *palas* ?)
- 10 *palas* fr m each *blāra* of cotton copper saffron gum resin madder etc
- 1 *manaka* for each *drona* of wheat mung barley, salt *cala* and such other meas rable objects

—Bīṣṇu inscription of Dhavala of Hastikṛpā, vv 8 16 940 A D

But the list is of little use w thout the knowledge of the coins and measures

veracity of this incumbent: he kills traffic by allowing thieves and taking taxes more than due. His illustrious student however holds that the officer encourages traffic by welcoming import (VIII. 4). But the suspicion is lurking; for he is to make good whatever is lost or stolen from merchants within his jurisdiction. A road cess also exists in the fiscal conception of the Śukranīli although it goes under the general name of *śulka* (IV. ii. 213)<sup>1</sup>; but it is more strictly a *road cess* as opposed to a police tax. "For the preservation and repair of roads, he should have dues from those who use the streets" (258).

Realisation "After carefully examining foreign commodities as to their superior or inferior quality and stamping them with his seal, he (the *antupāla*) shall send the same to the Superintendent of Tolls" (*vaidesyam sārtham krtasārāphalgubhāndavicayanam-abhi-jñānam mudrām ca datvā preśayedadhyaksasya*). At the toll-gate of the city, the merchants have to give their whereabouts, amount of cargo, etc. Twice the toll has to be paid for no seal, 8 times for counterfeit seal. For falsifying the name of merchandise (*nāmakṛte*)  $1\frac{1}{4}$  *panas* have to be paid for each load (*sapādapanīkam vahanam dāpayet*). Attempts at smuggling and escape of toll dues are met with heavy fines. In case of bidding the enhanced price goes to the treasury along with the toll (II. 20).

Hence commodities for sale shall not be let off without being weighed, measured or numbered (*dhṛto, mito, ganito vā*). Import of weapons (*śastra*), armours (*varma*), *kavaca*, *loha*, *ratha*, *ratna*, *dhānya*, and *paśu*<sup>2</sup> is forbidden and leads to forfeiture of merchandise (*ibid*).

<sup>1</sup> "The *śulka* is levied on goods in market place, streets and mines."

<sup>2</sup> The ban on the import of armaments and accoutrements is intelligible but not so on *loha*, *ratna*, *dhānya* and *paśu*. The first two of these even occur in the customs schedule of II. 23.

(The injunction of Manu, Visnu and Yajñavalkya against smuggling is identical) "He who tries to avoid the toll by buying or selling at improper time (i.e., at night, etc.) or by falsely enumerating his goods shall be fined eight times the amount of duty" (Manu, VIII 400) According to Visnu the evader shall lose all his goods (III 31) The king is to confiscate the whole property of a trader who exports goods of which the king has a monopoly or the export of which is forbidden (399, Vis V 130, Yaj II 261) The law of forfeiture thus applies to the entrance of goods laid under a ban as well as to the exit of goods under an embargo

The Arthasastra lays down that the toll of inferior commodities shall be fixed and exemptions considered by experts (II 20) Manu lets off small dealers with some trifle to be paid annually as tax (VII 137)

The scale of *pranaya* or benevolence levied to replenish a depleted treasury by king's officers is 1/6 of cotton, lac, flax, barks, wool (rauma), silk (kaśeya), medicines (? kausaya), flowers, fruits, vegetables, firewood, bamboo, flesh and dried flesh (vallura),  $\frac{1}{2}$  of ivory and skin (dantajina) A license has to be obtained for sale of these articles Internal dealers pay a fixed tax at the following rate

In gold silver, diamond precious stones pearls corals, horses, elephants	50 karas
In cotton threads, clothes, copper, brass bronze, perfumes, medicines liquor	40 karas
In grains liquids (rasa) metals (loha), carts (śakata)	30 karas
In glass and skilled artisans (mahākaravaḥ)	20 karas
Inferior artisans and animal rearers (? vardhakapovakah)	10 karas
In firewood bamboos, stones earthen pots cooked rice (pakṣanna), vegetables (haritapanyah)	5 karas
Dramatists and prostitutes (kuśilava rupajivaśca)	$\frac{1}{2}$ their wages

Forced labour was another item which fell on all occupations. "Mechanics and artisans, as well as Śūdras who subsist by manual labour, he (the king) may cause to work (for himself) one (day) in each month" (Manu, VII. 138; Gaut. X. 31; Vāś. XIX. 28; Viṣ. III. 32). The merchants may obtain commutation of *rājakariya* by selling one article every month to the king at discount rate (*arghāpacayena*, Gaut. X. 35).

Foreign ships touching at a port has to pay port dues to the *nāvadyakṣa*, an officer resembling the port commissioner of our times. Duties are remitted for cargo spoilt by water in a sea-beaten boat (Arth. II. 28).

The state monopolies according to the Arthasāstra are mines, salt centres and probably shipping. Mines involving small capital outlay are worked by the government itself. Otherwise these are leased out for a fixed share of the output or for a fixed rent (II. 12). The state also runs large industries like weaving mills under its own capital and management.

Since toll rates are fixed on the estimated value or profit of merchandise, prices have necessarily to be fixed. And fixed price requires fixed weights and measures. Hence, "let (the king) fix (the rates for) the purchase and sale of all marketable goods, having (duly) considered whence they come, whither they go, how long they have been kept, the (probable) profit and the probable outlay. Once in 5 nights, or at the close of each fortnight, let the king publicly settle the prices for the (merchant). All weights and measures must be duly marked and once in six months let him re-examine them" (Manu, VIII. 401-03). The interval depends on the variability in price of goods.

Authorised persons alone shall collect as middlemen grains and other merchandise. Otherwise they will be confiscated by the Superintendent of Commerce (dhānyapanyā-nicayāmscānujñātaḥ kuryuḥ; anyathā nīcitameṣāṃ panyā-dhyakṣo gr̥hñiyāt, Arth. IV. 2). This seems to be to eliminate competition, speculation and hoarding. Again, "whenever there is an excessive supply of merchandise, the Superintendent shall centralise its sale and prohibit the sale of similar merchandise elsewhere before the centralised supply is disposed of. Favourably disposed towards the people, shall merchants sell this centralised supply for daily wages,"—(panyābāhulyāt panyādhyakṣaḥ sarvapaṇyānyeka-mukhāni vikrīṣṭa tesvavikrīteṣu nānye vikrīṣṭān. Tāni divasavetanena vikrīṣṭān anugrahena prajānām. *Ibid*). This means a warehouse and clearance sale under state control and if customers competent to pay are not forthcoming, the goods may be disposed of for bodily labour.

This is how the law-giver and the economist met new contingencies. The derivation of a revenue from the new income was their primary concern but this required order in business.

From free to regulated economy.

From fixation of the toll they are led to fixation of prices, of weights and measures. With increasing facilities given for protection, charges multiply. With the increasing complexities of the market, the state comes to grip with new problems. It must liquidate speculation and hoarding, break monopolies and corners, dissolve glut and scarcity and maintain the equipoise between dealers and customers. It must in short inaugurate a regulated instead of a free market. Indian economic theory thus parts company with Adam Smith and Turgot and falls in line with the rigorous totalitarianism of Friedrich List.

**BOOK IV**  
**BANKING AND CURRENCY**



Siddham vase 42 Vesākhmase rāño Ksaharātasī kṣātrapa-  
 pasa Nahapānasa jāmātarā Dīnīkaputrena Usavadātena  
 samghasa cātudisasa imam lenam niyātitam data cānena  
 ahsayanivi kākāpanasahasrāni trini 3000 samghasa cātu-  
 disasa ye imasmim lene vasantanam bhavisati civarika  
 kuśānamūle ca ete ca kākāpana prayutā Govadhanavāthavāsu  
 śrenisu kolikamīkāye 2000 vrdhi padikaśata aparakolikani-  
 kāye 1000 vrdhi pāyūnapadikaśata ete ca kākāpanā apādi-  
 dātavā vodhūbhoja ete civarikasahasrāni he 2000 ye padike  
 sate eto mama lene vasavuthāna bhikkhunam vīsāya ekikasa  
 civarika bārasaka yā sahasra prayutam pāyūnapadike ēate  
 ato kuśānamūla . ete ca sarva srāvita nigamasabhāya  
 nibadha ca phalakavāre caritratoti bhūyo nena datam vase  
 41 Kātikāsudhe panarasa puvāke vase 45 panarasa.....niyu-  
 tam bhagavatām devānam brāhmanānam ca karṣāpana-  
 sahasrāni satari 70,000 pamcatrīśaka suvarna kṛtā phala-  
 kavāre caritratoti.

#### —Nasik Cave Inscription

Success! In the year 42, in the month of Vesākha,  
 Usavadāta, son of Dīnīka, son-in-law of king Nahapāna,  
 the Ksaharāta Kṣātrapa, has bestowed this cave on the  
 Samgha generally; he has also given a perpetual endow-  
 ment, three thousand—3000 *kākāpanas*, which, for the  
 members of the Samgha of any sect and any origin dwelling  
 in this cave, will serve as cloth money and money for out-  
 side life; and those *kākāpanas* have been invested in guilds  
 dwelling in Govadhana,—2000 in a weavers' guild, interest  
 one *pratīka* (monthly) for the hundred, (and) 1000 in another  
 weavers' guild, interest three quarters of a *pratīka* (monthly)  
 for the hundred; and those *kākāpanas* are not to be repaid,  
 their interest only to be enjoyed. Out of them, the two

thousand—2000— at one *pratika* per cent. are the cloth money ; out of them to every one of the twenty monks who keep the *vassa* in my cave, a cloth money of 12 (*kāhāpanas*). As to the thousand which have been invested at an interest of three quarters of a *pratika* per cent. out of them the money for *kuśāṇa*.....and all this has been proclaimed (and) registered at the town's hall, at the record office according to custom.

Again the donation previously made by the same in the year 41, on the fifteenth of the bright half of Kārtika, has in the year 45, on the fifteenth.....been settled on the venerable gods and Brāhmaṇas, viz., seventy thousand—70,000—*kārsāpanas*, each thirty-five making a *suvarṇa*, a capital (therefore) of two thousand *suvarṇas*. (This is registered) at the record office according to custom.

## CHAPTER I

### MONEY-LENDING AND CREDIT

Productive industries and unproductive business From money to money lending,  
 Business loan Family loan Instruments of credit pledge, surety Bond of debt  
 acquittance Rate of interest discriminating and differential rates accumulation  
 forfeiture and moratorium Illegal rates condemnation of usury Inheritance of  
 debt and credit Repudiation and debt suit Service and slavery for default  
 forcible realisation Punishment for unpaid debt Insolvency The debtor's  
 plight

Trade, the third of the *vattas* was followed by the fourth, viz., usury. With the growth of Unproductive business trade,—the primitive agricultural and pastoral economy, inclusive, of course of small cottage industries, is modified under the stress of currency and credit. Money introduces itself as a new factor in the market, increasingly asserting its place in exchange, and fostering under its protective wings the speculative trader. Beside agriculture and cattle rearing and other productive industries appears the art of making money simply by clever buying and selling or by lending one's hoarded wealth to others at interest. This means a partial breakdown of the self-sufficient agricultural cum-industrial village and accentuation of economic disparity between the classes.

Transactions of credit were fairly established by the post Vedic times when 'business' was well on foot. These did not begin with money. The owner of the land and merchandise might hire them out to enterprising people for a share of profit (Jat. VI 69, 1V 256, V 436). There is the oft-quoted simile that a man sets up a business contracting a loan (*inam adaya*,

com : 'taking goods on interest'), that his business succeeds so that he is not only able to pay off the old debt he had incurred but there is a surplus over to maintain a wife (Dn. II. 69; Mn. 39). In a more elaborate parable wealthy *gahapatī*s and their sons seeing a shop-keeper shrewd, clever and resourceful, competent to support his sons and wife and from time to time to pay interest to money loaned, offers him wealth saying: "master shop-keeper, take this money and trade with it, support your sons and wife, and pay us back from time to time."

*gahapatī vā gahapatiputtā vā addhā mahaddhanā mahābhogā te nam evam jānanti—ayam kbo bhavam pāpaniko cakbhumā ca vidbūro ca patibalo puttadāraṇ ca poṣetum ambhākaṇ ca kālena kālam anuppadātun ti. Te nam bhogeḥ nimantanti—ito samma pāpanika bhoge karitvā puttadāraṇ ca poṣeḥ ambhākaṇ ca kālena kālam anuppadehī ti. An. I. 177.*

In the *Arthaśāstra*, interest on stock, *i e*, loan invested for business (*praksepa*) is fixed at one-half of profit, payable every year, and accumulable up to a sum twice the principal (*mūlyadvigunah*) (III. 11). According to the *Sāntiparva* the share for capital is as high as 6/7 (85·7 p.c.) and even 15/16 (93·75 p.c.) of the profit (60·25). The rule however seems to apply only between a capitalist employer and hired hawker contracted on a profit-sharing basis.

Business apart, there were of course cases of borrowing and lending in cash and kind to be repaid with interest. Agricultural loan was an early practice of enlightened statesmanship and in famine doles were given to the indigent gratuitously or on terms of repayment at harvest.<sup>1</sup>

Debts might be secured or unsecured. The creditor might demand a surety for payment or a surety for appearance. For clearance of unpaid debt the heir of the former was liable, not of the latter (Manu, VIII. 159 f.; Viṣ. VI, 41;

*Instruments of credit*

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, pp 108f

Vr XI. 41) Big commercial deals were made on credit on the security of a signet ring (Jat I. 121) The debtor's daughter might be taken as slave to secure against accumulated interest (No 436) The pledgee of course did not acquire proprietary right on the pledge (adhi) which was ruled by the laws of deposit It was to be reconveyed when the debt was paid up (Arth III 12, Yaj II 58 f) unless it was lost without the fault of the holder (Gaut XII 42) A productive pledge (i.e., usufructuary mortgage) is never lost to the debtor even in case of default (Arth III 12, Yaj II 58 f, Manu, VIII 143, Vis VI 5) and it cannot be given away or sold under any circumstances<sup>1</sup>

There was considerable use of the instruments of credit Merchants sometimes transacted between themselves on credit without any security "Many traders borrowed money from him (Anathapindika) on their bonds—to the amount of 18 crores, and the great merchant never called the money in" (bāhū vohā-rūpajivino pi ssa hatthato panne aropetvā attharasakotī-samkhāma dhanam imam gambhīsu, Jat I 227) But all loans secured or unsecured had to be confirmed by means of a written bond or agreement of debt (kārāṇa Manu, VIII 154 coms, Vr VIII 11, mṛgannam) which the creditor (māyika) had to present to the debtor when asking for any payment (Jat IV 262) The city god of Sāvattihī instructs a fairy to realise Anathapindika's bond debt in the following manner "Take the semblance of his agent reprar

<sup>1</sup> Governing a pledge and the two parties in it the Arthashastra lays down

In the absence of the creditor or mediator the amount of the debt may be kept in the custody of the elders of the village and the debtor may have the pledged property redeemed or with its value fixed at the time and with no interest chargeable for the future the pledge may be left where it is When there is any rise in the value of the pledge or when it is apprehended that it may be depreciated or lost in the near future the pledge may with permission from the judges (dhananātha) or on the evidence furnished by the official in-charge of pledges sell the pledge either in the presence of the debtor or under the presidency of experts who can see whether such apprehension is justified (III 12)

to their houses with the bonds in one hand and pens in the other and say,—“Here is the acknowledgment of your debt—pay up the gold *kahapanas* you owe”

tvam tassa vyuttakavesam gahetva ekena hatthena  
pannam ekena lekhanam gahetva tesam geham gantva  
idam tumhakam mapannam tumhehi gahitakahapanam  
detva (Jat I 230)

For every payment the creditor must always give the debtor a receipt and an acquittance on clearance. Otherwise he must pay interest to the debtor as he had obtained previously (Nar I 114 f, Vr XI 66)

The just and normal rate of interest is laid down by law-givers as  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent per month or 15 p c per annum (Manu VIII 140, Vās II 51, Baudh I. 5 10 22, Nar I 99, Vr XI 3, Arth III 11). In Gautama the rate is 5 *masas* a month for 20 *kārsapanas* (XII 29). If the ratio as laid down by commentator Haradatta, viz, 1 *karsapana* = 20 *māsas* is accepted then the rate works out perfectly to 15 p c per annum. But on the basis of Manu's equivalence, i.e., 1 *karsāpana* = 16 *masas* (VIII 134-36) the rate is 18.75 p c per annum. Presumably the rate is higher in the earlier Sūtra work and Haradatta, a very late commentator modified the scale of equivalence only to adjust the Sutra rate to the more common rate of the later Smṛtis.

According to the commentators Narāyana, Rāghavananda and Nandana and according to Yajñavalkya (II 37) the rate of 15 p c is for debt secured by a pledge. For unsecured loans the rates are 2, 3, 4 or 5 in 100 according to the *varnas*

i.e. for Brahmana debtor	24 p c per annum
, Kṣatriya	36 ,
, Vaiśya	48 „
, Śudra	60 „

—Manu VIII 141f, Vis VI 7, Nar I 100

Differential customary rates are given also in the Arthasāstra, but not on the basis of caste discriminations. Apart from the just rate (dharmyā) of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  p. c. per month, these are 5, 10 and 20 respectively :

i.e., the commercial rate (vyavaharikī) is	60 p c. per annum.
the rate prevailing in forests (kāntā-rakānām) is	120 „ „
the rate among sea traders (sāmu-drānām) is	240 „ „

—III. 11.

Special forms of interest are compound interest (cakravṛddhi)<sup>1</sup>; periodical interest (kālavṛddhi) in which the interest is to be paid with the principal within a fixed period<sup>2</sup>; stipulated interest (kārita), i.e., exceeding legal rate; corporal interest (kāyika) which is payable with bodily labour either of the debtor or of a pledged animal or slave;<sup>3</sup> daily interest (śikhāvṛddhi) and the use of a pledge (bhogalābha) when no interest is claimed (Gaut. XII. 34 f.; Manu, VIII. 153; Nār. I. 102-4; Vr. XI. 4-11).

Interest can accumulate only up to a sum equal to the principal, after which it ceases (Gaut. XII. 30 f.; Arth. III. 11). But usury was

growing ahead, and later law-givers have to adjust their rules accordingly. Manu has: 'Interest payable with the principal shall never exceed the sum, or in the case of grain, fruit, wool or hair and beasts of burden, four times the loan, (VIII. 151). Subsequent law-books speak in more and more elastic terms. In some countries loan grows to twice the principal; in others 3, 4 or 8 times. Gold may grow to twice; grain to thrice; clothes to four times; liquids octuple; interest on women and cattle may grow up to their

<sup>1</sup> This form of interest is prohibited in the Arthasāstra (III. 11)

<sup>2</sup> 'If a large or small interest is taken on condition that the loan is to be repaid on a certain date, and that, in case of non-payment, it is to be trebled or quadrupled, that is called periodical interest'—Haradatta

<sup>3</sup> See Manu, VIII. 153 Coms

issue (Viṣ. VI. 11-15; Nār. I. 106 f.). According to Vṛhaspati gold grows to twice; clothes and base metals thrice; grain, edible plants, cattle and wool four times; pot-herbs five times; seeds and sugarcane six times; salt, oil and spirits eight times (XI. 2).

No interest accrues for a pledged loan where the pledge yields profit (Gaut XII. 32; Manu, VIII. 143; Viṣ. VI. 5; Yāj. II. 58; Arth. III. 12) nor such a pledge (i.e., a usufructuary mortgage) can be given away or sold for default. If the pledge is misused, the creditor forfeits the interest and has to pay the price (Manu, VIII. 144; Viṣ VI. 6), for un-authorised use he forfeits half the interest (Manu, VIII. 145). The pledge must be reconveyed when the debtor is ready, i.e., when he pays up (Arth. III. 12). A moratorium of interests is prescribed for persons engaged in long sacrifices (dīrghasatra), diseased, living in teachers' place, minor (vālam) and pauper (asāram) (Arth. III. 11) as well as for a person for whom it is physically impossible to pay, e.g., an imprisoned man (Gaut. XII. 33 and Haradatta). Payment of debt cannot be refused by the creditor but may be kept in others' custody free of interest. Debts neglected for ten years except in the case of minors, aged persons, diseased, involved in calamities, sojourning abroad shall not be received back (daśavarṣopekṣitamṇamapratigrāhyam, III. 11).

The strict injunctions of the Śāstras against violation of legal or customary rates together with the growing elasticity of the rules show that the practice shaped the theory rather than theory the practice. The Arthśāstra (III. 11) and Yājñavalkya (II. 61) think that the welfare of state requires a strict security of lending transactions and prescribe fine for transgressors. Manu forbids six special forms of interests (VIII. 153). While in earlier books moneylending is tolerated (Gaut. X. 6, XI. 21) it is condemned in later

Forfeiture and moratorium

Usury.



works in emphatic terms (Vis II 41 f., Baudh I 5 10 23 25, Manu, III 153, 165, 180) obviously because it degenerated into usury<sup>1</sup>

A debt unlimited by time is bequeathed to sons, grand sons or lawful heirs or joint partners of debt (sahagrahinah pratibhuvavo va, Arth III 11, Gaut XII 40) A debt is

inherited down to three generations not to the 4th (Vis VI 27 f., Nar I 4, Vi XI 19) Debt contracted for the benefit

of a united family must be discharged by the members even if they have separated afterwards (Manu, VIII 166, Vis VI 36, Nar I 13) A husband is responsible for his

wife's borrowing, not a wife for her husband's except in the case of herdsmen, hunters, vintners, dancers and washermen who live and earn with their wife (Arth III 11) According to Visnu however, the husband and

son is not to pay the debt of his wife or mother except in the case of herdsmen, hunters, etc (VI 32, 37) Money due by a surety, a commercial debt, a bridal fee (sulka),

debts contracted for spirituous liquor or in gambling, and a fine shall not involve the sons of the debtor (Gaut XII 41) For clearance of unpaid debt the heir

of a surety for payment is liable, not of a surety for appearance (Manu, VIII 159 f., Vis VI 41, Vi X 41) From the Jātrikas it appears that dues were inherited

also on the creditor's side It is for a deceitful debtor (dharanako) to refuse to pay to the creditor's son on the creditor's death (IV 45) Another vicious set ruined a

merchant family (setthikula) by repudiating their debts " Those who hired their land or carried on merchandise

for them, finding out that there was no son or brother

<sup>1</sup> The Sastra rules are plainly the reason why Aelian rushes into the statement

The Indians neither put out money at usury nor know how to borrow It is contrary to established usage for an Indian either to do or to suffer a wrong and therefore they neither make contracts nor require securities (V L iv 1)

in the family to enforce the payment, seized what they had in hands<sup>1</sup> and ran away as they pleased

Ye pi nesam khetam va bhata va nam codetva ganhanto  
nam n atthitu attano attano hatthagatam gahetva yatha  
rucim palayimsu, VI 69

Of course repudiating a lawful debt is condemned  
and the perjurer becomes an outcast  
Repud a on & debt  
suit (vasalo, Sut 120) For disputed cases  
debt suits were resorted to The bond  
was the most effective document besides which there must  
be more than one witness, and at least two acceptable to  
both parties A debtor cannot be sued simultaneously for  
more than one debt by one or two creditors (nanarna  
samavaye tu nako dvau yugapadabhivadeytam anyatra  
pratisthamant) excepting in the case of a sojourner who  
is to pay in the order of borrowing (Arth III 11)<sup>2</sup>

A recognised form of payment both of principal as well  
as of interest was by personal labour  
Payment by service  
and slavery (kayika) and the creditor could claim this  
as a right if the debtor failed in his  
stipulation (Mbh VII 109 1b) Manu of course, qualifies  
this rule with the clause—"unless the debtor is of superior  
caste to the creditor (VIII 177) which may well corres-  
pond with practice if for 'caste is substituted 'power and  
position The creditor might even take the defaulting  
debtor or any of his wards into slavery as happened in the  
case of Isidasu who was carried away by force in lieu  
of debt and accumulated interest (Therig 444)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cowell and Roue render hatthagata as what they could lay the hands upon which should certainly be seized as above

<sup>2</sup> These rules give the lie direct to the remark of foreign memoirists. Among the Indians one who is unable to recover a loan or a deposit has no remedy at law. All the creditor can do is to blame himself for trusting a rogue (Meg Per 97C. N. col. Damasc 44. Stob. Serm 40)

<sup>3</sup> For enslavement from debt see Bk VI Ch I

On the legality of force in realisation of debt, law-givers are of two opinions. In Āpastamba it is reprobated for a creditor to sit with his debtor hindering him from fulfilling his duties and thus forcing him to pay (I. 6. 19. 1). But force is approved in Manu (VIII. 49), Viṣṇu (VI. 18 f.) and Vṛhaspatī (XI. 55). The creditor might employ an agent to realise debt by showing the bonds (Jāt. I. 230).

Turning from legal quibbles to actualities and realities of the situation, it may be observed that the debtor being the poorer and weaker party always stood at a disadvantage with the creditor irrespective of their castes. In the Anguttara nikāya it is frankly admitted that if the debtor is poor he may be put to jail for any trifle ranging from 100 down to  $\frac{1}{2}$  *kahāpaṇa*, but not so if he is rich and powerful (I. 251). The imprisonment was preceded by severe humiliations and hecklings. One gets into debt in straits and when the interest falls due (*kālābhatam vaddhīm*) and he is a defaulter, the creditors press him (*codenti*), beset him (*anucaranti*), dogging his footsteps and vexing him, throwing mud at him in public or in a crowd and doing like things that cause pain (*ātapa-tthapana*, etc. Com.) and at last bind him (*bandhanti*) (An. III. 352). Creditors are known as heckling and pressing debtors for payment at very daybreak (Sn. I. 171). A debtor, though a Brāhmaṇa is pressed so hard by the creditors that he goes into the forest to commit suicide (Jāt. VI. 178). Another insolvent asks his creditors to appear with their bonds only to commit suicide in their presence (IV. 262). Such a terror they were that a whole settlement of defaulting carpenters shipped off overnight in an unknown voyage (IV. 159). No wonder, it is a bliss to be without debt (An. II. 68). The man who cooks his own humble pottage but is free from debt (*aṇṇi*) is the happiest man on earth (Mbh. III. 311. 115).

## CHAPTER II

### BANKING

Hoarding Deposit and its laws Origin of banking—economic influence  
Corporate banks Industrial banks Fixed deposits and endowments in guild banks  
Real property as deposit Rate of interest on fixed deposits Security and stability  
Ubiquity of banks Comparison between the North and the South

As has been seen, usury was disreputable, and it was not always easy to recover a loan. Hence Hoarding to lend one's hoarded money at interest was not preferred by all. Safety, rather than profit, was the prime consideration for many. They buried gold or coins underground, generally in a forest or in river bank (I 227, 277, 323) or in some other lonely place. Huge amounts,—of the description of 18, 30, or 40 crores thus remained in the custodianship of the Earth though not as safely as the depositors expected. For kings and robbers were always vigilant over these troves and a flood or erosion might sweep away all traces of the buried treasure.

An honest depositary was more reliable than a clod. Rules on deposit adumbrated in the Smritis show that to receive and properly discharge a deposit from a known person was a very common institution. The laws of debt either apply *ipso facto* to deposit or the rules governing deposit are formulated on the same lines as the rules of debt and pledge. The Arthaśāstra also states that the laws of debt apply to deposits (upanidhi). In case of foreign invasion, natural calamities and accidents the depositary is not answerable for loss. Otherwise a used or lost deposit is not only to be requited but a fine is to be fixed (III 11). The Jātakas are familiar with this practice. Treasures could be deposited in good

faith to a person and to misappropriate it was penal (I. 375; II. 181). A depositary who spends a cash of a thousand pieces, compounds by giving his daughter to wife to the depositor (III. 342) or with the same amount (VI. 521).

Thus, much before the Christian era were developed the two pre-requisites of banking, *viz.*, the practices of lending money at interest and depositing property for safety. The former was morally retrograde because it had a definitely economic import and smacked of selfishness and avarice. The latter suffered under no moral stigma and the depositary even acquired virtue by acquitting himself unselfishly. These two institutions, ethically antagonistic but economically akin, fused into one under the dominating demands of the market. The honest and virtuous depositary found it worth while to lend the deposit to businessmen for interest, disregarding what moralists might say of him. The depositor in his turn claimed a part of the interest so derived. The latter thus obtained an interest from his deposit and the former an interest from its further investment. Thus deposits became safe. The depositor and the depositary met each other's demands, and so the depositary and the businessman in search of capital. And none had to stand on virtue, each had his returns in cash.

This development is clearly indicated in the statement of the Arthaśāstra that the rules of *upanidhi* (deposit) apply to *nikṣepa* (investment) (III. 11). That is, if one receives an investment he has to discharge his obligations in the same manner as if he receives a deposit simply on good faith. Of course individuals were not often competent to accept such obligations. It was the guilds and corporations who received deposits and lent them to business thus functioning as banks. This also is illustrated in the Arthaśāstra where it elaborates its unscrupulous revenue-making devices. "King's agents

The rate of interest on fixed deposit, i.e., where  
 “ those *kāhapanas* are not to be  
 repaid, their interest only to be enjoyed,”  
 is according to Nasik 12  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1 *pratika*<sup>1</sup>  
 monthly for the 100 when the deposit is 2000 *kāhapanas*  
 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  *pratika* monthly for the 100 when the deposit is  
 1000 *kāhapanas*. Thus,

the interest on fixed deposit of 2000 is 12 p.c. per annum

“ “ “ 1000 „ 9 p.c. „ „

Nasik 17 viii corroborates the former rate but the deposit  
 is much less, only 100 *kāhapanas*. The rate in the Mathura  
 Inscription is much higher. The interest on 1100 *purāṇas*<sup>2</sup>  
 is sufficient to enable 100 Brāhmanas to be served daily  
 and the destitute and hungry according to a fixed schedule.  
 Probably the rates differed from place to place and from  
 time to time and sometimes even in the same place and  
 time according to the credit of the banks. In any case it  
 was lower than the customary rate of 15 p.c. per annum  
 of ordinary lending transactions because of the better  
 security afforded to depositors. “The low rate of the  
 interest in fact is an index at once of the security and  
 stability of the banks, their efficiency, permanence and  
 prosperity which attracted to them even royal deposits and  
 benefactions”<sup>3</sup>

The execution of the objects of the endowments required  
 much extra-professional skill, e.g., plant-  
 ing trees, providing medicine, supplying  
 ghee and the like. Big deposits were  
 distributed over more than one bank obviously with a view  
 to additional security. The banking operation of guilds and  
 businessmen was not confined to any particular place and

<sup>1</sup> *Pratika* seems to be the same as *laspāṇa* as Bühler thinks. This is however  
 refuted by Senart E. I., VIII 8

<sup>2</sup> Silver coin not copper *karsāpana*

<sup>3</sup> R. K. Mukherji: *Local Self Government in Ancient India* p. 98

time after its beginning which is traced back to the Christian era. The Gupta inscriptions record similar benefactions of deposits (akṣayanīvī) of which the interest alone was appropriated for charity on behalf of *bhikṣus* and the capital kept in tact. D. B. Spooner who discovered no less than sixteen specimens of a seal at Basarh from Gupta times bearing the legend 'śreṣṭhi-nigamasya,' is led to remark: "Banking was evidently as prominent in Vaiśālī as we should have expected it to be judging from the notice in Manu to the effect that the people in Magadha were bards and traders."<sup>1</sup> But the South led the West and the East in these activities. There are profuse South Indian Inscriptions of grants providing for sacred lamps at shrines sometimes received in kind according to the convenience of the donors and trustees. The point of difference between the Northern and Southern inscriptions is that the rate of interest of the latter is a bit higher ranging between 12·5 and 50 p.c. while that of the former is between 9 and 12 p.c.<sup>2</sup> In South India moreover such deposits were received not only by industrial guilds but also by village unions who invested the deposit in public works.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of Archaeological Survey, 1913-14*, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> R. K. Mukherji. *Op. cit.*, pp. 118f.

<sup>3</sup> Hu'tsch; *South Indian Inscriptions*,

## CHAPTER III

### EXCHANGE AND CURRENCY

Origin of currency    Barter    Standard media of exchange. Transition to currency    Foreign or Indian origin? Foreign coins and their influence, Persian *siglos*, Roman *aureus* and *denarius*. Barter holds ground

Development of currency    'Circulating monetary weights'    Metric divisions    Attestation    punch marks,—by traders, by local government. Local character of coin types

Metallic contents of currency    Gold, Silver, Copper,—the standard *kāṣṭhapaṇa*, the tokens of *kāṣṭhapaṇa*, fluctuating relations    The exchange ratio—gold and silver, gold and copper, fluctuating relations    Other metals

State monopoly of currency? Private coinage    State regulation    Debasement of coins    The *rupasūtra* or science of currency and coinage

The evolution of currency, by ushering in Credit and Banking changed the face of the economic world. But it was a slow and long process. The primitive method of exchange was virtually confined to barter. As late as in Dharmasūtras and the Pali canon it is a very common practice (Cv. VI. 19. 1). Gautama (VII. 16 f.) and Vāśiṣṭha (II. 37 f.) permit this on special commodities. A potter barter his wares for rice, beans (*mugga*) or pulse (*kālāya*) (Mn. 81). The system prevails in as small scale as obtaining a meal for a gold pin (Jāt. VI. 519) or in as big scale as between 500 wagons and wares of corresponding value (Jāt. I. 377).

From barter of goods the next stage was to use certain commodities of general value as standard media of exchange. The earliest and commonest of these were the cow and rice. The medium of course varied according to the class within whom it circulated. Among the military class horses suited better. The tribute proceeds of a day are estimated at above the value of 1,000 horses (Mbh. III,



195. 9) and a teacher's fee is measured as 800 steeds of the best breed (V. 106. 11). Slaves, rice and other food grains were similarly used (Jāt. I. 124 f. ; Mil. 341). Pāṇini, besides mentioning *kāṃsa*, *sūrpā* and *khārī*, i.e., grains of these measures, testifies to the circulation of *go-puccha* or cow's tail (V. 1. 9) and of *vasana* or pieces of cloth of definite value (V. 1. 27).

The media of exchange and their replacement by a metallic currency depends on the stage of social evolution. Since this was not uniform among all communities and in all localities the means of exchange necessarily varied even at the same time. Skins of game animals were the most suitable media for the nomadic and hunting aboriginals. For pastoral tribes like the Ābhīras domestic animals like the cow and not their skins are the appropriate measures of value. In the agricultural stage, agricultural products, particularly the staple corn come to be used as currency. As commerce develops diverse articles such as garments, coverlets and goatskins become circulating media (Av. IV. 16). Metals and shells, first worked into ornaments, turn into media of exchange and then into units of currency. The former stage was reached though on a very limited scale and within limited circles at the time of the early Vedic literature. The latter and the final stage is seen for the first time in the Vinaya,—the 11th and 12th Bhikkhuni Nisaggiya Rules and the Cullavagga.<sup>1</sup>

These and many other evidences refute the theory of foreign origin of Indian metallic currency propounded by Keneddy and Smith. It has been held that "introduction into India of the use of coins, that is to say, metallic pieces of

Corrency : Foreign or Indian origin?

<sup>1</sup> Māsakarūpassa, V 8 2; XII 1 1 "It is evident from the use of the word 'rūpa' here that stamped pieces of money were known in the valley of the Ganges as early as the time when the Cullavagga was composed." Rhys. Davids : *Vinaya Texts*, foot note.

definite weight authenticated as currency by marks recognised as a guarantee of value, may be ascribed with much probability to the 7th century B.C. when foreign maritime trade seems to have begun."<sup>1</sup> Now foreign maritime trade began much earlier, and the earliest *kārṣāpana* coins found in India bear no evidence of foreign influence. On the existence of an independent Indian coinage in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. Rapson argues :—(a) the square Indian form cannot be traced to the round-shaped Western coinage, (b) the square coin was so firmly established in *cir.* 200 B.C. that it was imitated by the earliest Greek settlers, *viz.* , Demetrius, Pantahion and Agathocles, (c) and it is represented in the sculptures of Bodhi Gaya and Barhut. Thus native coins were in circulation along with the Persian *sigloi* in the Achaemenian period.<sup>2</sup>

Of course Smith is true so far as with the growing trade and other contact with the West, foreign coins circulated in India and influenced the native coinage. Since gold in relation to silver had a higher value abroad than in India,<sup>3</sup> foreign merchants exchanged their silver for Indian gold. This accounts for the large number of silver coins found in India. The Persian *sigloi* thus circulated freely in Indian satrapy (*cir.* 500-331 B.C.) and this is confirmed by the adoption of the Persian weight standard for their silver coin by the Bactrian princes in India "with the object of bringing the Graeco-Indian silver coinage into relation with the Persian coinage, in such a way that two Greek hemidrachms of about 40 grains might be the exact equivalent of a Persian *siglos* of 80 grains."<sup>4</sup>

Influence of foreign  
coins Persian *siglos*

<sup>1</sup> Imperial Gazetteer, II 135

<sup>2</sup> J. R. A. S., 1895, pp 869-71

<sup>3</sup> See *infra*, p 363

<sup>4</sup> Rapson, *op cit*, pp 867 f

In the days of the Periplus, among the imports to Barygaza are "gold and silver coin, on Roman aureus and denarius. which there is a profit when exchanged for the money of the country" (49).

"The profit on the exchange was due to the superiority of the Roman coinage to that of India, which latter was still crude, of base metal (bronze or lead) for which even the bullion was imported."<sup>1</sup> The Roman aureus and denarius were current throughout western India and strongly influenced the Kuṣāna and Kṣatrapa coinages. The *dināra* appears as a current coin and finds its place in later Smṛtis (Vṛ. X. 14 f.) and epigraphic records. The Yueh Chi Kings in India struck their coins in imitation of Rome so that "to the present day ancient drachmae are current in Barygaza, coming from this country (Bactria) bearing inscriptions in Greek letters and the devices of those who reigned after Alexander, Apollodotus and Menander" (Peri. 47). After the conquest of Kabul, Kadphises I imitated the coinage of Augustus and Tiberius (14-38 A.D.). When Roman gold of the early Emperors began to pour into India in payment for her merchandise and as the Roman coin was accepted throughout the commercial world at that time, the advantages of a gold currency and of the Roman standard weight were realised. For the facility of trade Kadphises II struck and issued the orientalised *aurei* on a large scale, agreeing in weight with their prototypes and not much inferior in purity.

Thus metallic currency, born and brought up in the soil, was influenced by foreign coinage. But money regulated only a part of the business of the land. Traffic by barter held its ground all through.<sup>2</sup> When a dog is bought for a

Continuation of  
barter

<sup>1</sup> Schoff. But gold and silver currency was known in India from much earlier times.

<sup>2</sup> It still prevails in this country. It is wrong for Rhys Davids and Mrs Rhys Davids to hold that "the older system of traffic by barter had entirely passed away never to return." *Buddhist India*, p. 100; *Cambridge History*, p. 217.

'monetary weights' and the realisation of their usefulness by the civil authorities, the punch-marks became the affair not of private dealers but of local authorities in a district or town. "The greater exactness of weight and the security against fraud afforded by the imperial coinage and the best of native coinages have rendered the use of the money-changer's private stamp less and less necessary. If then, in ancient times the issue and regulation of the coinage was mainly or exclusively in the hands of the local authorities, the use of these distinguishing marks must have been universal and generally recognised . . . . ." "The merchants or money-changers, to whom we have attributed the obverse punch-marks, had simply to submit their coins to the chief authority in the district, who rejected such as were deficient in weight or quality of metal, and sanctioned such as were approved by marking them with his official stamp, which may perhaps be identified with the solitary punch-mark so often found in the centre of the reverse. The occasional occurrence of more than one of these reverse punch-marks on a coin is naturally explained by supposing the coin to have passed current in more than one district, and consequently to have been officially tested more than once."

Rapson's inference is corroborated by the passage in the *Visuddhimagga* which indicates that every place which issued coinage had its own distinguishing mark or marks stamped on it, by observing which the shroff could at once tell from which place any particular coin came. "Discoveries of punch-marked coins with their provenances definitely known.....give rise to the incontestible conclusion that they constitute 'coinages' peculiar to three different provincial towns,—one belonging to Takṣaśīlā of North-West India, the second to Pātaliputra of Eastern India and the third

Local character of  
coinage

to Vidisā of Central India.”<sup>1</sup> Even up to a later stage Indian coins preserved their local types. The great Empires did not enter a homogeneous coinage. “Each of such an empire has, as a rule, retained its own peculiar coinage, and this with so much conservatism in regard to the types and fabric of the coins, that the main characteristics of these have often remained unchanged, not only by changes of dynasty, but even by transference of power from one race to another.”<sup>2</sup> In the extended dominions of the Graeco-Indian and Indo-Scythian princes or of the Guptas or of the Hunas, distinct varieties of coins were in circulation in different districts at the same time. The provenance of the coins is sufficient evidence to this fact.<sup>3</sup>

The metal so stamped and used differed in the districts.

Metallic substances.

The standards adopted might be gold, silver or copper. After Kadphises II introduced

gold coinage in the 1st century A.D., it continued to be the standard money for a long time. The Western Kṣatrapas retained silver currency in Mehoā, Gujarat and Kathiawad. In Besnagar of Eastern Malwa again, all the finds from pre-Mauryan to the Gupta times have been copper *kārsāpaṇas*.

The first to get into coinage was gold. Gold ornaments

Gold coins

and jewellery being commonly used as a form of reward or payment, the

transition to coinage was easy. A clear example of this

<sup>1</sup> D. B. Bhandarkar : *Ancient Indian Numismatics*.

<sup>2</sup> Rapson : *Catalogue of Andhra and Kṣatrapa Coins*, p. xi. The author cites the instances of Greek Princes Pantaleon and Agathocles retaining the Taxila type, the Scythian Ratiabula retaining the earlier Greek type in Mathura, the Guptas continuing the type established by the Western Kṣatrapas in Guarat.

<sup>3</sup> The pre-existence of divinities of different faiths in the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka, viz., Greek, Scythic, Zoroastrian, Vedic and Buddhist gave rise to the theory that those kings were supporters of an eclecticism in religion. Rapson explains this differently. “The natural explanation of this diversity is that these various classes of coins were current in the different provinces of a large empire... The coins, no doubt, reflect the particular form of religion which prevailed in the district in which they were struck.” Rapson : *Andhra and Kṣatrapa Coins*, p. xii, footnote.

is *niṣka* which in the Ṛg-Veda meant a necklet or medallion, in later times became successively a unit of weight of gold and a gold coin. In the Vedic times "a gold currency was evidently beginning to be known in so far as definite weights of gold are mentioned."<sup>1</sup> These are the *niṣka*, the *śatamāna*, the *suvarṇa*, the *pāda* and the *kṛṣṇala*.<sup>2</sup> Pāṇini knows several of these (V. 1) and the Smṛtis cite them as weight standards. Gold coins occur in the Arthaśāstra (II. 14) and in the Jātakas,—e.g., the *nikkha* (IV. 460 f. VI. 246 f.), the *suvaṇṇa* (VI. 69, 186) and the *suvaṇṇamāsaka* (IV. 106; V. 164). The *kahāpaṇa* also sometimes appears as a gold coin (I. 478). The Sāmantapāsādika says that a *kahāpaṇa* may be of gold, silver or copper.<sup>3</sup> The *hiraṇṇa* while generally indicating bullion in compound with *suvaṇṇa*, sometimes occurs also as gold coin, as for example when Anāthapiṇḍika purchases the Jetavana by paying it with these coins. But there have been no actual finds of gold coins from those early times. "Some thin gold films with punch-marks on them were found in the Sakiya Tope, but these were too flimsy to have been used in circulation as coins."<sup>4</sup>

Silver was a rarer metal in India. Reference to silver in Buddhist canonical works is much more scarce than to gold and other metals.<sup>5</sup> In fact Buddhaghosa omits silver altogether while defining *rūpiya* as stamped piece of gold, copper and bronze, wood and lac or any of these worked up into ornaments (Vin. III. 239 f.). But there is no warrant to say that "no

Silver coins.

<sup>1</sup> Macdonell and Keith *Vedic Index*, II 805

<sup>2</sup> By citing references from Vedic texts, D. R. Bhandarkar attempts to show that these were not mere money weights but definite denominations of coins *Ancient Indian Numismatics*.

<sup>3</sup> Rhys Davids: *Ancient Coins and Measures*, and IV. 3

<sup>4</sup> Rhys Davids: *Buddhist India*, p. 100

Mrs Rhys Davids. J. R. A. S., 1901, p. 877

silver coins were used."<sup>1</sup> For Buddhaghosa himself admits elsewhere of the existence of silver *kārṣāpaṇas* which figure also in the state mint of the Arthaśāstra (*rūpyarūpa*,—Com. *kārṣāpaṇa*, II. 12). If silver was scarce in Indian mines, this was imported from foreign merchants for Indian gold and thus a large number of silver punch-marked coins actually discovered are accounted for. The comparative scarcity of silver explains the depreciation of silver weight standards in the Smṛtis. According to these a silver *dharāṇa* weighs 58 grains to which agree the *kārṣāpaṇa* silver coins actually found. A futile attempt at currency reform is seen in the Arthaśāstra where it tries to bring the metrology of the three metals to the same standard.<sup>2</sup>

In the post-Vedic period the *kārṣāpaṇa* emerges as a new class of coin seen for the first time in Pāṇini and the Pali canon. Like the other coins, it at first meant the weight of any metal,—according to extant copper coins, 146 grains. "Hence it probably is that, whereas the unit of current money in Buddhist times was evidently the bronze *kahāpaṇas*, passages are here and there met with which either explicitly refer to gold coins or seem to imply gold, as much as we, for instance, can speak of 'pennyweights' of gold..... *Suvarṇa* and *kahāpaṇa* are distinguished in Jātaka IV. 12. A leaden *kahāpaṇa* is spoken of (Jāt. I. 7). But the identification of *kahāpaṇa* with copper pieces in Jāt. I. 425, 426, and the statement in the Vinaya Commentary (IV. 256) that 4 *kahāpaṇas* = 1 *kaṃsa* (bronze or copper coin) would

<sup>1</sup> Rhys Davids : loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Arthaśāstra, 88 *gaurasārṣapa* = 1 *māṣa*, 16 *maṣa* = 1 *dharāṇa* (silver).

„ „ Manu, 90 *gaurasārṣapa* = 1 *māṣa*, 16 *māṣa* = 1 *suvarṇa* (gold). Thus the Arthaśāstra's *dharāṇa* (silver) is less than Manu's *suvarṇa* (gold) by only 32 *gaurasārṣapa*s or 1·8 *ratas* (3 grs.),—the degree of error being explained by the fact that the weight of a white mustard seed may slightly vary in different parts of the country See *supra*, p. 275, table.

alone be sufficient to fix its substance *qua* coin." <sup>1</sup> In Manu and Viṣṇu the *kārṣāpaṇa* is the weight standard exclusively of copper. Throughout the Jātaka stories the copper *kahāpaṇa* is the standard coin in circulation as is shown by the frequent omission of the denomination after the amount whereas other coins are mentioned when intended (Jāt. IV. 378; VI. 96, 97, 332). If these coins do not survive in as much quantity as might be expected it is because it is a more perishable metal than silver and apt to be melted into domestic utensils. The mention of *kārṣāpaṇa* in Manu, Viṣṇu, Yājñavalkya and the Sātavāhana Inscriptions and its discovery in the excavations at Besnagar bring its career down to the 4th century A.D.

The standard *kārṣāpaṇa* had its token coins. In Pali literature occur the *kahāpaṇa*, half *kahāpaṇa*, *pāda* or quarter *kahāpaṇa*, *māsaka* or 1/16 *kahāpaṇa* and *kākaṇī* or 1/80 *kahāpaṇa* (Vin. II. 294; Jāt. I. 121, 340; III. 448). Even *sippikā* or cowry shells are used as petty coin (I. 426). The Arthaśāstra distinguishes between the standard and token coins as *kośapraveśāyam*, i.e., those which deserve to be received into the treasury, and *vyavahārika*, i.e., those which are current in the market. The tokens are 1/2 *paṇa*, 1/4 *paṇa* (*pāda*), 1/8 *paṇa* (*aṣṭabhāga*), 1/16 *paṇa* (*māsaka*), 1/32 *paṇa* (*ardhamāsaka*), 1/80 *paṇa* (*kākaṇī*), 1/160 *paṇa* (*ardhakākaṇī*) (II. 12). <sup>2</sup> Coins excavated at Besnagar correspond approximately to 146 grains, the weight of a *kārṣāpaṇa* and to its fractions of 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, and 1/16 thus pointing these to be *kārṣāpaṇa* and its subdivisions. <sup>3</sup>

The value of the *kārṣāpaṇa* of course changed with the varying value of copper. This is clear from the observation of Buddhaghosa that at the time of King Bimbisāra, at Rājagaha 5 *māsakas* were

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Rhys Davids; J.R.A.S., 1901, p. 578.

<sup>2</sup> These minute subdivisions are effected by the mixture of alloys.

<sup>3</sup> Annual Report of Archaeological Survey, 1913-14, pp. 220ff; 1914-15, p. 67.



equal to 1 *pāda* and 4 *pādas* were equal to 1 *kārṣāpaṇa*, which is corroborated by the Jātaka reference that a 4-*māsaka* piece is of lower value than a *pāda* (III. 448). Buddhaghosa further warns that the *kahāpaṇa* of 20 *māsakas* is the ancient *nīlakahāpaṇa*,<sup>1</sup> not the Rudradāmaka or *kahāpaṇa* of 16 *māsakas*. Obviously in the scholiast's knowledge the depreciated standard was adopted and followed from the time of the Kṣatrapa king.

Neither was the ratio between gold, silver and copper steady. In a Nasik Cave Inscription, 1 *suvarṇa* is given as equal to 35 *kārṣāpaṇas* presumably the silver standard otherwise known as *dharāṇa* or *purāṇa*. According to the Arthaśāstra's metrology the silver *dharāṇa* and the gold *suvarṇa* are almost of the same weight and on that basis the ratio between gold and silver is 35 : 1. But as a matter of fact the silver standard was depreciated because of the rarity of the metal and the extant silver coins generally conform to Manu's weight for a *purāṇa* which is about 58 grains. The rate of exchange between gold and silver on the basis of Manu and the Nasik Inscription thus becomes  $58 \times 35 : 146$ ; i.e., 14 : 1 approximately, not very far from the present rate. From the Periplus however, Cunningham has shown that gold was to silver as 8 : 1 gold being much cheaper in India than in Persia.<sup>2</sup> The same ratio according to the Sukranīti is 16 : 1 (IV. ii. 181 ff.).

The relation between gold and copper presents still more difficulties. According to Vṛhaspati (and Kātyāyana), the weight of a *suvarṇa* or *dināra* is 124 grains and that of a *karṣa* 146·4 grains and 48 *kārṣāpaṇas* = 1 *suvarṇa* or *dināra* (X. 14 f.). Thus the exchange rate between gold and copper is  $146 \times 48 : 124$  or 57 : 1 approximately. Copper is thus almost 20 times

<sup>1</sup> The *nīlakahāpaṇa* is noted in Jātaka No. 536

<sup>2</sup> Coins of Ancient India, p. 5

its present value. This is intelligible when there is no intermediate silver coin between gold and copper as appears under the Kuṣāṇas and the Guptas. The Śukranīti which gives the rate between gold, silver and copper, fixes it at 16 : 1 and 80 : 1 respectively so that gold and copper stand at 1280 : 1. The remarkable variation in exchange rates is explained by the variation in regional distribution of metals whether obtained from native soil or through foreign exchange and by the still infant attempts of business communications to break through regional barriers.

Coins might be of other metals beside gold, silver and copper. The Nidānakathā speaks of lead *kahāpaṇas*. Coins of that metal have been discovered from about the beginning of the Christian era belonging to Strato, Azes and Rañjubula and to the Andhrabhṛtya dynasty. Nickel was traced by Cunningham in the money of the Indo-Grecian kings and it was surmised to have been used by the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas in the time of Alexander.<sup>1</sup> Potin<sup>2</sup> was used by Vīlivāyakura and his successors in the district round about Kolhapur, by the Andhrabhṛtya kings, exclusively in the Chanda district of the Central Provinces and by the Kṣatrapa dynasty founded by Caṣṭana. Buddhaghosa even says that *māṣakas* of wood, bamboo, palm-leaf or lac might pass current if they bore the requisite impression of *rūpa*.

From the very nature of its origin it may be presumed that coinage was not a state monopoly. It is wrong to hold that from the earliest times this was the privilege of the state,<sup>3</sup> and Mrs. Rhys Davids is right to assert that "there is no evidence whatever to show that these instruments of

<sup>1</sup> 'White iron.'

<sup>2</sup> An alloy of yellow and red copper lead, tin and some dross.

<sup>3</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar : *Ancient Indian Numismatics*.

exchange (the Jātaka coins) constituted a currency of standard and token coins issued and regulated by any central authority." Coins, at least in the early stages of their growth, might be struck and issued by individual traders, guilds, municipal bodies and district or central authorities. In theoretical works like the Arthaśāstra, currency is worth being reserved as a state concern. But even here the state goldsmith is to employ artisans to manufacture gold and silver coins from the bullion of citizens and country people (*sauvarṇikah pauraṇāpadānām rūpyasuvarṇamāvekṣanibhiḥ kārayet*, II. 14) without charge of any brassage. Only "in getting a *suvarṇa* coin (of 16 *māṣas*) manufactured from gold or from silver, one *kākaṇi* ( $\frac{1}{4}$  *māṣa*) weight of the metal more shall be given to the mint towards the loss in manufacture."

The only way by which the central authority could regulate the currency was by way of the weight of the pieces (Manu, VIII. 403; Vāś. XIX. 13). The Arthaśāstra demands the strict maintenance of the standard weight and severely reprimands lowering by even one *māṣa*. But this was not always possible, and a coin was perforce debased when the supply of its metal fell short. Debasement might be effected either by reducing the fixed weight or by increasing the alloy while maintaining the fixed weight. The former may be the reason of the mutability of weight noticeable in some of the archaeological finds of *kārṣāpaṇa* and its subdivisions. Debasement of gold by means of metallic alloys is known in early Pali literature (*upakkilesā*, An. III. 16; Sn. V. 92). The Arthaśāstra permits an alloy of  $\frac{1}{4}$  in copper and of  $\frac{5}{16}$  in silver with four parts of copper and one part of *likṣṇa*, *trapu*, *sīsa*, and *añjana*. By assaying 113 extant silver coins Cunningham detected an alloy

varying from 13·8 to 24·8 per cent. Other methods of debasement were the plating of copper pieces with molten silver practised from as early as 500 B.C.<sup>1</sup> and addition of molten copper to a depreciated silver coin.<sup>2</sup>

The early Indian name of coin is *rūpa* or *rūpya*, apparently derived from the image or impression it carried. The *rūpasūtra* is the science of coinage and currency. In his note on *rūpasutta* (Mv. I. 49. 2), Buddhaghosa says that the learner must turn over and over many *kārṣāpaṇas*. Evidently it was an applied science and much of the knowledge was derived empirically. The shroffs who by observing the stamp marks could at once tell from which place any particular coin came (*Visuddhimagga*) were versed in the lore. So were the *rūpadarśaka* of the *Arthaśāstra* and the *rūpatarka* of Patañjali entrusted with the inspection of coins. The science treated of (1) the metallic composition of coins, (2) their shape and technique, (3) their devices and places of manufacture and circulation, (4) the mint, (5) the offices connected with manufacture of coins and regulation of currency, (6) detection of counterfeit coins, (7) and above all making a revenue by inflation and sophistication. The scope and importance of the subject makes it conceivable how it is worthy of serious study not only for a tradesman but also for a prince for the purposes of administration.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. A. S. B., 1890, p. 182

<sup>2</sup> J. B. O. R. S., 1919, pp. 16 f. See also Bhandarkar : *op. cit.*, pp. 164 f.

<sup>3</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar : *op. cit.*, p. 166.

**BOOK V**

**OCCUPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

Yatha nu kho imani bhante puthu sippayatanani seyyathidam hattharoḥa assaroḥa rathika dhanuggahā celaka calaka pinda davika ugga rājaputta pakkhandino mahanaga sura cūmayodhino dasakaputta alarika kappaka nahapaka suda malakara rajaka pesakara nalakara kumbhakara ganaka muddika yaṇi va paṇi añṇani pi evaṃ gatani puthu sippayatanani—te diṭṭh evaṃ dhamme sandiṭṭhikam sippa phalam upajīvanti, te tena attanam sukhenti pinenti matapitaro sukhenti pinenti puttadāraṃ sukhenti pinenti mittamacce sukhenti pinenti samanabrāhmaṇesu uddhaggikaṃ dakkhiṇaṃ patitthapenti sovaḍḍikaṃ sukhavipakaṃ sagga samvattanikaṃ

#### Samannaphala Sutta, Dīgha Nikaya

There are Sir, a number of ordinary crafts — elephant drivers, horsemen, charioteers, archers, standard bearers, camp marshalls, camp followers, high military officers of royal birth military scouts, men brave as elephants, champions, heroes, warriors in buckskin, home born slaves, cooks, barbers, bath attendants, confectioners, garland makers, washermen, weavers, basket makers, potters arithmeticians accountants, and whatsoever others of like kind there may be All these enjoy, in this very world, the visible fruits of their craft They maintain themselves and their parents and children and friends in happiness and comfort They keep up gifts, the object of which is gain on high, to recluses and Brahmanas,—gifts that lead to rebirth in heaven, that redound to happiness, and have bliss as their result

## CHAPTER I

### SERVICES AND ROYAL ENTOURAGE

Occupations outside the *Varittas* King's officers—*amacca* *vājabhogga*, *vājañña*, 'seventh caste' The senior *amaccas*,—*senapati*, *purohita*, *mahāseṭṭhi* *gandhabba*. The second grade,—*uparaja*, *rajjuka*, *cōharīla*, *bhāṇḍagārīka* The *adhyakṣas*,—of elephants of horses, of cows others animal doctors The *agghapaka* or court valuer The *nagaraguttika* or police commissioner Spies Clerks Lower incumbents The barber and shampooer Specialists Artists and technicians

Bureaucracy of the *Arthashastra* The grades Military and espionage service Benefits Payment by cash and by assignment of revenue

The four familiar *vārttās* did not comprise all the occupations of the people Men had to seek their livelihood beyond the old Sastric horizon of agriculture, cattle-rearing, trade (including industries) and usury The police and the administration developed a crop of offices and servants A number of independent professions crystallised to meet the complex demands of urban life Civilisation also produced its scums and dregs, the outlaws and the underworld of society In a speech to Ajatasattu Makkali Gosāla refers to as many as 4,900 kinds of occupation (*ajiva*) (Dn. II 21)

The services in the palace and under the state provided a large number of people The highest officers in government service were the *amaccas* who were King's officers • generally, though not always recruited from the same family, often the son succeeding the father (*amaccakula* II 98, 125) ' " The *amaccas* form a class by themselves which is generally hereditary, and in consequence of this hereditary character, to which probably, as in the case of the *Khattiyas*, a specially developed class consciousness is joined, possesses a certain though distant resemblance

with a caste."<sup>1</sup> The *rājabhogga*, people in king's pay and service, similarly represent a class wider than the *amacca*, inasmuch as they include also the lower officers. They are mentioned as a class along with Khattiyas, Brāhmaṇas and Gahapatīs in the Vinaya (Pātimokkha, Nisaggiya 10) and appear to be synonymous with the *rājāñña* (Assalāyana Sutta). In the light of the Pali evidence, Megasthenes is supported while stating the high civil servants as a caste. "The seventh caste consists of the counsellors and assessors of the king. To them belong the offices of state, the tribunals of justice and the general administration of public affairs" (Str. XV. i. 49).

Since administrative arrangements were not uniform in every country and in every age, titles and functions of officers differ. Some of these were common almost everywhere, others were peculiar to a particular state. In the

The *amaccas* - senior officers

Jātakas the number of *amaccas* is given at the conventional figure of 80,000 with a *senāpati* or commander-in-chief of king's forces at the top (*senāpatipamukhāni asitiamaccasahassāni*, V. 178). He also discharges peacetime functions like administration of justice (II. 186; Com. on the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta) and participates in legislation (V. 115). Not a lesser personality was the *purohita* who performs sacrifices (I. 334 ff.; III. 43 ff.; Ait. Br. VIII. 24), explains omens and trains up the heir-apparent (V. 127), a fatherly friend and adviser. He is very often seen in sole mastery of all affairs,—temporal and religious (*atthadhammānusāsake*, Jāt. II. 105, 125, 173; III. 21, 115, etc.). Along with the *purohita*, the *mahāsetthi* and the *gandhabba* are seniormost officers (*issarā*, I. 413). The former represented the industrial guilds to the court and assisted the king in framing his

<sup>1</sup> Fick: *Die Sociale Gliederung*.



industrial and commercial policy.<sup>1</sup> The *gandhabba* was the chief musician (III. 91). It is unlikely that he was accorded a rank equal to the chaplain and finance minister except with kings having a marked musical taste as for example, Samudragupta or Akbar.

Probably just below the topmost rung was the *uparāja* or governor in a province or district  
*The lesser amaccas.* (II. 367). He did not always represent a king; sometimes he was deputed by a republican government as in the case of the Sakiyas and the Koliyas (V. 412 f.). In the Maurya empire, princes of royal family were selected as viceroys of its five provinces and the practice may have been borrowed from earlier times.

The *rajjugāhaka amacca* (II. 367) or *rajjuka* was the survey and settlement officer. In the Arthaśāstra the survey tax is called *rajju* and in the Jātakas the officer appears with the rope for measuring lands. Bühler identifies him with the *rājuka* in Aśoka's inscription on whom Hultzsch observes: "The Rājuka originally 'held the rope' in order to measure the fields of the ryots and to assess the land tax. Thus the word became the designation of a revenue settlement officer, just as in British India the chief administrative officer of a district is still called 'collector' because his special duty is the collection of revenue."<sup>2</sup> Much earlier than the times of Aśoka and of the composition of the Jātakas the original surveyor had become the 'driver of the chariot of state.' The *rajjugāhaka amacca* is holder of the reins of government and of the rope of survey. The *rajjukas* or *rājukas* are probably the *agronomoi* of Megasthenes, the country magistrates who "superintend the rivers, measure the land as is done in Egypt and inspect the sluices, by which water is let out from the main channels into their branches"

<sup>1</sup> For discussion of his functions see *supra*, pp. 262 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. I, p. xl.

and who "collect the taxes" (Str. XV. i. 50). In the Arthaśāstra, the settlement and revenue officer is the *samāhartṛ*.

The *vinicchayāmacca* (Jāt. II. 181, 301) or the *vohārika mahāmatta* (Mv. I. 40. 3; Cv. VI. 4. 9) is the chief justice and law officer. He tries civil suits and settles points of law when asked to give opinion (Jāt. II. 367, 380). In the Arthaśāstra, the judicial officer is the *vyavahārika*.

The head of the treasury is the *bhandāgārika* and with him went the judgeship of all the merchant guilds (*sabbasenīnam vicāranārahama bhandāgārikatthānam nāma adāsi*).<sup>1</sup> This is marked as an innovation. "Before that no such office had existed, but there was this office ever after" (IV. 43). Elsewhere this officer figures next in rank to the *senāpati* and higher than *setthi*. The treasurer or keeper of king's purse is sometimes known also as *heraññika* (III. 193).

There is an inspector of king's jewels (*manipabhamsa-*  
*The adhyakṣas* *nam kammam karonto*, VI. 383) parallel  
 to the *suvarṇādhyakṣa* of the Arthaśāstra.  
 His function was the testing of jewels for the palace.

Quite respectable but presumably below this second rank, were the *adhyakṣas* or departmental heads of whom the Arthaśāstra enumerates twenty-one. They are not, however, excluded from the purview of the Epics. The *adhyakṣas* of elephants and of horses released their animals from the stables when the Vānaras set fire to the city of Lamkā (Rām. VI. 75. 27). Nala was appointed superintendent of stables to king Rūpama at the pay of 10,000 (Mbh. III. 67. 6).

The *adhyakṣas* presuppose an advanced and complicated administration which is unknown to the mass of Jātaka stories. But so far at least as the elephants and horses

<sup>1</sup> Fick renders "worthy of the regard of all guilds."

are concerned, they give the social and administrative setting in which such offices might develop. They betray a consciousness, no less than the Arthaśāstra, of the utility of these two animals in the service and protection of the state. The *hatthidamaka*, the *assadamaka* and *godamaka* are the trainers of the three animals respectively (I. 505), and the *assagopaka* (II. 301) is the keeper of horses. A short but interesting description is given of how the *hatthidamaka* trains this animal in the arts of war (Mn. 125) and fights king's battles with it (Jāt. II, 413). Arts of catching wild elephants by means of tame ones are also briefly noticed (Mn. 125) which are so elaborately described by Megasthenes and fully known in the Rāmāyaṇa.<sup>1</sup> The sons of these trainers, by dint of specialised knowledge, succeeded to their father's post (Jāt. II. 94, 98, 221; Dn. IX. 32). Elephant-lore (*hatthisuttam*) and horselore (*assasuttam*) were cultivated as separate branches of learning (Jāt. II. 46) and specialists in this knowledge bear the honorifics of *hatthācariya* and *assācariya* (I. 413, 444; II. 20, 98). Even the elephant-doctors (*hatthivejja*) were in king's service, foreshadowing the lengthy dissertations of Megasthenes and Aelian on the diseases of these animals and the specifics and treatment adopted by experts.

The *agghāpaka* or court-valuer, assessed the price of goods ordered for the palace.<sup>2</sup> The *nagaraguttiha*, or town warden was charged with the arrest and execution of outlaws (III. 59, IV, 289). On receiving a complaint from townsfolk, a king orders him to post patrols at intervals and have the burgler caught (*nagaraguttikam*

<sup>1</sup> Some elephants strolling in a lotus park saw some men riding on elephants "lasso in hand and said "we are less afraid of fire, lasso or other weapons than of these selfish kinsfolk who show the way to trap us to the elephant tamers" (VI. 16, 6-8).

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, pp. 269f.

anapetta tattha tattha gumbam thapetvā . . III 436)  
 He was like the Police Commissioner of the modern city  
 "Judging from the insecurity which on account of frequent  
 mention of robbers and thieves in the Jātakas and other  
 folk literature must have existed in Indian cities in ancient  
 times, he was no small personage ""

The police officer of the Jātakas was not assisted by  
 spies The Jātakas have no department  
 or officers corresponding to the elaborate  
 espionage system of the Arthashastra or of the Mauryas,—  
 "the sixth caste," in which "the best and most trustworthy  
 men are appointed" and to whom "is entrusted all that  
 goes on, and of making reports privately to the king"  
 (Str. XV 1 48).

Less commonly than now, but not unoften the educated  
 young bourgeoisie settled down in clerical  
 jobs of the secretariat A *kulaputta*  
 makes his living by being a clerk of the signet (*muddāya*),  
 clerk of account (*ganānaya*) or computer (*samkhāyena*)<sup>1</sup>  
 (Mn 13, Dn II 14) or he may be the king's scribe  
 (*rajalipikara*, *lekhaka*, Sanchi Ins , Nasik C I , 16 vii;  
 26, viii, Arth II 10) Hence also *mudda*, *ganānā* and  
*lekha* are among the esteemed arts (*ukhattham nama*  
*sippam*) in contrast to the lower ones of basket maker,  
 potter, weaver, cobbler and barber (*Suttavibhanga*, *Pacittiya*,  
 II 2 1).

Below these was a lot of petty officials and mediocrities,  
 viz , the *bandhanagarika* or the gaoler  
 who figures in an unenviable company of  
 people given to tormenting others (Mn 51, 60; An II.

<sup>1</sup> Fick *Op cit* , p 103

<sup>2</sup> In the Arthashastra, the *samkhya* is among the village officers who may be remunerated with land without power of alienation (II 1) Cultivation of statistics and numerical methods (*samkha*, Mā 89) developed primarily from the need of a crop forecast for assessment purposes

207 ; III. 382), the *doṇamāpaka* or corn-measurer, i.e., a tax-collector under the *rajjuka* and presumably the same as the *balipatiggāhaka* and the *niggāhaka* who appear as blackguards of royal extortion<sup>1</sup>; the *sārathī* or driver of king's chariot (Jāt. II. 265, 367); the *dovārika* or the door-keeper (II. 241, 367; Mil. 234, 240, 264; Mn. 56) among whom were door-keepers of the palace and gate-keepers of the city. A palace *dovārika* appears in the unfortunate rôle of being thrashed with blows by a whimsical king every time he went in and out. The city *dovārikas* were four, one at each gate (Jāt. IV. 289) who watched the gates and closed them at night in a particular hour after shouting thrice to warn those who inadvertently kept out (II. 379). The *dauvārika* who figures in the highest rank of officialdom in the Arthasāstra must have been some other functionary.

The various petty officials of the civil and military staff cannot be exhausted by enumeration. We have the *chattaggāha* (parasol-bearer) and the *asiggāha* (sword-bearer), personally attending to the king (Jāt. VI. 194). Among people who gain their livelihood in dependence on the king (*vañño khattiyassa muddhavasitassa.....rājūpajivine jane*) are the *anikaṭṭha* (bodyguard), *pārisajja* (courtiers), *bhaṭa* (soldiers), *balattha* (royal messengers), etc. (Mil. 234, 240, 264). The list may be extended from "the people who enjoy the visible fruits of their craft in this world" viz., the *hatthāroha* (elephantman) *assāroha* (horseman), *rathika* (chariotman), *dhanuggaha* (archer), *chelaka* (standard-bearer), *calaka* (camp marshal), *piṇḍa-dāvika* (camp-follower), *cammayodhina* (warrior in buckskin), etc. (Dn. II. 14). Among menials further below are *ālrika* (cook), *nahūpaka* (bathman), *suḍa* (confectioner), *mālākāra* (garland-maker) and *rajaka* (washerman) (*Ibid.*)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 142

<sup>2</sup> The renderings are Rhys David's

Toilet, coiffure and shampooing were very common luxuries and hence the barber (*sīsapasādhana-kappako*, Jāt. II. 190 ff.) and the bather (*nahāpaka*) had a good demand for their services (I. 342). The bathman's art is thus drawn in a parable: "Just as a skilful bathman or his apprentice (*nahāpako vā nahāpakantevāsi vā*) will scatter perfumed soap-powder (*nahāniya cunnāni ākiritvā*) in a metal basin, and then besprinkling it with water drop by drop, will so knead it together that the ball of lather, taking up the unctuous moisture, is drenched with it, pervaded by it, permeated by it within and without, and there is no leakage possible ....." (Dn. II. 76). The process of bathing includes shampooing, rubbing oil, bathing with a fine powder and then costly garland, unguents and garments (XXIII. 9; cf. XVII. i. 23); Mn. 124; Rām. II. 65. 8; 83. 14).

Sometimes services of specialists were necessary for assisting the military or the police. And they had to be offered a high status and handsome remuneration. Archers (*dhanuggaha*) capable of exhibition performance are given wages of 100,000 a year (II. 87) and 1,000 *kahāpaṇas* daily (V. 128)—inequitously high, so as to make the old archers jealous. 1,000 pieces a fortnight was however reasonable at which rate another is taken into royal service and deputed to kill wild animals affecting travellers and to fight battles (I. 357). So a youth skilled in tracking footsteps is appointed by a king at the daily wages of 1,000 pieces (IV. 43).

A good number of artists and artisans were maintained in the palace for beautification, entertainment and more useful works, e.g., the *uyyānapāla* (II. 345) or *ārāmika* (III. 365) or park-keeper who was well posted in the art of gardening and sometimes conceived and worked out royal parks (Rām. VII. 52. 7); the dancers, the musicians, the actors, the bards, the

astrologers, the sooth-sayers, etc., who were maintained with regular allowances in every court. The king had skilled artisans of all varieties for construction of forts, ships, armaments, etc., and for the working of mines, fisheries and other royal industries. The Jātaka commentary says that the king keeps artisans (*e.g.*, vaddhakim) to make instruments necessary for the exercise of *virīya* or for good and bad acts (V. 242). Nārada exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira to give artisans under his employ raw materials and wages with strict regularity.

dravyopakaraṇaṃ kiñcit sarvadā sarvaśilpinām  
cāturmāsyaṅvaram samyak niyataṃ samprayacchasi

Mbh. II. 5. 118.

The bureaucracy conceived in the Arthaśāstra is much more elaborate and complex than the small

The services of the  
Arthaśāstra.

officialdom of the Pali canon. It gives a hierarchical structure with precise classification of officials in order of their salary and rank (V. 3).

The *ṛtvik* (sacrificial priest), the *ācārya* (teacher), the *mantri* (chief minister), the *purohita* (chaplain) and the *senāpati* (commander-in-chief) are accorded equality with the *yuvarāja* (heir-apparent), the *mātr* (queen mother), and the *rājamahīṣī* (chief queen) in the civil list each drawing 48,000 *paṇas* per annum.

The *dauvārika* (?), the *antarvaṃśika* (superintendent of harem), the *praśāstr* (commander), the *saṃāhātṛ* (collector-general) and the *sannidhātṛ* (chamberlain) are each to draw 24,000.

The *nāyaka* (chief constable), the *paura* (city officer), the *vyavahārika* (judge), the *karmāntika* (superintendent of manufactories), the *mantripariṣad* (members of ministerial council), the *rāṣṭrāntapāla* (superintendents of countryparts and of boundaries) along with a prince (*kumāra*) and a prince's mother (*kumāramātr*),—12,000.

These high scales of salary are fixed with a view to provide against temptation and discontent. "With this they will be loyal and powerful supporters of the king's cause,"—*svāmiparibandha-balasahāyā hyetāvatā bhavanti*.

*Srenimukhyāḥ* (army chiefs) and chiefs of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry and the *pradeṣṭāraḥ* (commissioners) get 8,000 each. This is fixed with an eye to allowing them a good following in their sphere (*svavargānukarṣino*).

The *adhyakṣas* of infantry, cavalry, chariotry and elephantry and keepers of timber and elephant forests (*dravya-hastī-vanapālāḥ*)—4,000.

The chariot-driver (*rathika*), the army-physician (*anīka-cikitsaka*), the horse-trainer (*assadamaka*), the carpenter (*vardhaki*), the animal-keepers (*yonipoṣakāḥ*)—2,000.

The *kartāntika* (foreteller), the *naimittika* (reader of omens), the *mauhūrtika* (teller of good or bad times), the *paurāṇika* (annalist), the *sūta* (story-teller), the *māgadha* (bard), *purohita-puruṣāḥ* (retinue of the priest) and *sarvādhyakṣāḥ* (departmental superintendents)—1,000.

Trained soldiers (*śilpavantah pādātāḥ*), staff of computers and scribes (*samkhyāyaka lekhakādivargah*), and village officer (*grāmabhṛta*)—500; trumpet-blowers (*tūryakāra*)—300; actors (*kuśīlava*)—150; skilled artisans (*kāruśilpinah*)—120.

Servants in charge of quadrupeds and bipeds (*catuspada-dvipada-paricāraka*), miscellaneous workmen (*pāṇikarmika*), attendants upon royal person (*upasthāyika*), bodyguards (*pālaka*), procurers of forced labour (*viṣṭivandhaka*)—60.

King's playmate (*āryayukta*), elephant-driver (*ārohaka*), sorcerer (*mānavaka*), miner in mountains (*śailakhanaka*), all kinds of attendants (*sarvopasthāyinaḥ*), teacher (*ācariya*), scholars (*vidyāvantaḥ*) shall have honoraria (*pīyāvetana*) ranging from 500 to 1,000 according to merit.

A messenger (*dūta*) of middle quality shall get 10 *paṇas* for each *yojana* he travels, twice as much when he travels



from 10 to 100 *yojanas*. For spies, schedules vary from 250 to 1,000.

The above list excludes the *gopas* or census officers and *sthānikas* or revenue officers under the *samāhartṛ*. Their work is inspected by the *prādestṛs* or commissioners deputed by the *samāhartṛ* (II. 35). The *nāgaraka* looks after the affairs of the capital (II. 36).

The huge espionage system in the Arthaśāstra's conception of state with its wide ramifications over the whole body-politic is a sad commentary on the moral of the bureaucracy. The higher officers are constantly to be watched with spies lest they stray into sedition and disloyalty and for the dirty job are exploited the lower servants of the household—the *suḍa* (sauce-maker), *arālika* (cook), *snāpaka* (bather), *saṃvāhaka* (shampooer), *āstaraka* (spreader of bed), *kalpaka* (barber), *prasādhaka* (toilet-maker), *udakapariṣāraka* (water-carrier), and *rasada* (juice-maker) (I. 12).

Superintendents of 100 or 1,000 *vargas* (groups of staff) shall regulate the subsistence, wages, profit, appointment and transfer (*bhaktavetanālābham ādesam vikṣepam ca kuryuh*). Officers employed to guard royal buildings, forts and countryparts will never be transferred.

The officials of the Arthaśāstra enjoy the benefits of gratuity, bonus and insurance against sickness. "Sons and wives of those who die in service shall get subsistence and wages. Infants, aged persons or diseased persons related to deceased servants shall also be shown favour. During funeral, sickness or childbirth, the king shall give presentation to the servants concerned."<sup>2</sup>

*Karmasu mṛtānām putradārā bhaktavetanam labheran. Bālavṛddhavyādhiścaīṣām anugrābyāḥ. Pretavyādhitasutikā-kṛtyeṣu caīṣāmarthamānakarma kuryāt—V. 3.*

The Arthaśāstra lays down a very healthy maxim with regard to the payment of the officers from the point of view of the state. Although the *adhyakṣa*, the *saṃkhyāyaka*, the *gopa* and the *sthānika* are among the village officials who may be remunerated with land without power of alienation (II. 1), later in the Book, the author is more cautious. "When short of funds, the king may pay with forest produce, cattle or fields along with a small amount of money (*hiranyam*). If he wants to colonise waste land he shall pay in money alone (*śūnyam vā niveśayitum abhyutthito hiranyameva dadyāt*). But if he wants to regulate the affairs of all villages equally, then no villages will be given (*na grāmam grāmasajātavyavahāra-sthāpanārtham*, V. 3). The economist-statesman no doubt profited by the experience of earlier days. The baneful practice common in the Jātakas, of paying the high officers of state like the *purohita*, the *senāpati*, etc., with grants of land or revenues from villages, was telling upon its authority and financial security. The effect was no doubt hardly different from the reaction of the Jaigir system on the great Mughal Empire.

## CHAPTER II

### INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONS

Teaching profession — Centres of learning    Applied education    Fees  
 Artistic professions — Singer and music player    Actor, troupes    Bards, mimes,  
 etc    Stigmatisation  
 Occult professions — Astrologer    Soothsayer    Palmist etc  
 Miscellaneous

#### 1 *Teaching Profession*

Besides the services there were independent professions in which people lived by purveying their skill or knowledge for a fee. Among these the teaching profession was the most respectable though not the most paying. Unlike most others it was a settled profession localised, as in the case of the arts and crafts, in particular cities. Benares was such a centre of learning (Jat. I. 463). A northern Brahmana, after learning all the arts becomes a teacher of world wide fame at Benares and teaches 500 pupils (Bodhisatto udiccabrahmanakule nibbattitva vayappatto sabbasippe pāram gantvā Baranasiyam disāpamokkha acariyo hutvā pañcasate manase sippam vacesi, I. 436). Sometimes the professor repaired to the forest for the isolation and seclusion it gave to academic pursuits. A world-famed teacher (disāpamokkho acariyo) of Benares teaching *sippas* to 500 pupils goes into the forest to avoid hindrances to religious life and to the studies of his pupils and he is supplied free by people of adjoining locality with rice, milch cow and other gifts (III. 537). The passage represents ancient Indian education with its best ideals and most realistic setting. Religious and academic life were inseparable and the teacher in his own person set up the standard of

that you do not visit. Go then to every village, town and city and gathering a crowd around you first of all sing this song in the midst of the people."

tumhākam agamanaṭṭhānam nāma n'atthi, tumhe gāma-mgamarājadhāniyo gantvā samajjam katvā samajjamandale pathamam eva imam gītaṃ gāyeyya, Jāt. III. 61.

Elder Tālaputa was born in an actor's family, acquired proficiency at theatres suited to his clan (kulanurūpesu naccaṭṭhānesu) and "became well-known all over India as leader of a company of actors. With a company of 500 women and with great dramatic splendour he attended festivals in village, township and royal residence and won much fame and favour. He was giving performance at Rājagaha (nagaravāṣinam samajjam dassitvā) with his usual success" (Therag. 1090ff. Com.). Such a party of actors (śailālaka) lived in Mathurā in the 1st and 2nd centuries of the Christian era whose sons figure as dedicators in a Jaina inscription from that place.<sup>1</sup>

For the actor the professional name was *kuśilava*,—*naṭa* or *naṭaka* being the more generic term inclusive of all sorts of artists—the actor, musician, dancer, acrobat and magician. The Arthaśāstra is suspicious that the actors' visits may affect the sobriety and thriftiness of the people. At night they are to stay in a particular place and avoid accepting lavish gifts of desire or causing too much loss to any one (*kāmadānamatimātram ekasyātipātaṃ ca varjayeyuh*). For dereliction, the fine is 12 *paṇas*. They may hold their performances to their liking in accordance with

<sup>1</sup> On this Bühler has the following note in the *Epigraphia Indica*, I. 43 :

"It is impossible to interpret *Śailālaka* otherwise than as a synonym of *Śailālin* which according to Pāṇini, IV. 3. 110 originally was a name of those actors who studied the sūtras of Śilālin and according to the *Koshas* was used later to denote any actor .... It further shows that play acting was then, as in the present day, the business of particular families—a fact which may also be inferred from the introduction to several Sanskrit dramas where the *naṭi* is sometimes called the wife of the *Sūtradhāra* and his brothers are mentioned as actors. In a Jaina story of the clever boy *Bharata* we hear even of a *naṭagrama*....."

the procedure of their country, caste, family, profession, copulation and language (kāmaṃ deśajātigotra caraṇa-maithunāvabhāsenā namayeyuh, IV. 1).

With the actor and the musician, the mime, the bard and the story-teller belonged to the same category. They all maintained a peripatetic living, moved in troupes or individually, gave demonstrations and shows in public gatherings and were accorded the same social status. They moved with their women (Rām. II. 83. 15) and if the Śāstra injunctions are to be believed, had a very low standard of morals. Adultery is permitted to wives of cārakas (actors and singers according to the Commentary) "for such men send their wives (to others) or, concealing themselves, allow them to hold criminal intercourse" (Manu, VIII. 362; Baudh. II. 2. 4. 3). No wonder the professions are condemned (Mbh. XIII. 90. 11) or assigned to the Śūdra (Arth. I. 3). The *kuśilavas* (bards, actors, jugglers, dancers, singers and so forth—Medh.) are unworthy of invitation to a śrāddha (Manu, III. 155-53); food given by the actor and musician is not acceptable (IV. 210, 214). Actors and teachers of dancing, singing and acting are stigmatised as *upapātakins* (Baudh. II. 1. 2. 13). Public dancers and actors are all condemned (I. 5. 10. 24; Vis. XXXVII. 32, LI. 13f; Nār. III. 3; Vr. XXII. 3).

### 3. Occult Professions

A large mass of professionals thrived upon the superstition and credulity of the people by the exercise of the occult arts. Even in the court which attracted the best intelligence and talents of the land the services of the *nakkhattajānaka* (astrologer) and the *nemittaka* (reader of omens) are frequently requisitioned to give their studies upon problems (VI. 5). There were also interpreters of dream (*supinapāṭhaka*, V. 443) and of signs (*lakkhana-pāṭhaka*, VI. 9) who give bogus readings. The practice of

these pseudo sciences is damned in the Smritis probably because of the superstitions and public deception they encouraged. Among the black list of disreputables are the palmist (Mbh XIII 90-7), the astrologer (Manu, II 16<sup>2</sup>, Vis LVIII 7, Nar I 183), the weather prophet (Nar I 183), interpreters of omens and practitioners of propitiatory rites (Nr XXII 3). The guises of a *hartantila* or of a *namittala* or of a *mauhurtala* are helpfully taken by spies in the Arthashastra (IV 4 VIII 1).

### Miscellaneous

There were professional wrestlers (*malla*yuddhaka, IV 81 *malla*, Mil 331) who fought duels in the ring before the gallery (Jat VI 276). With the *nata* the *ghallas* and the *mallas* ('fencers with sticks or wrestlers and jesters, Com') are relegated to the lowest class (Manu, XII 45). There were bathers who did the customer shampooing and massage with oil, then a good bath with sponge, powder and water and lastly a nice toilet with brush, garland, scents and dress. There were ferrymen (*navika*) who forded people across a river for a fee (*vetanam*) which it was foolish to ask for *after* crossing (Jat III 230). A more honourable and skilful profession was archery, the expert hiring himself out for exhibition shooting or for some act of prowess (III 219 ff, V 128 ff Mn 13, An IV 423).

Except for the teacher, the soothsayer and occasionally a good musician or an archer, all these people ranked in the economic scale below the average. Their social position was accordingly adjusted. They performed no direct productive functions in economic society but they supplied amusements and entertainments, the much needed tonics of laughter, humour, thrill and romance. Further below were other plebeian professions stigmatised in Buddhist and Brahmanical canon, in theoretical as well as in popular literature.

## CHAPTER III

### BAD LIVELIHOOD

Greek observers on public morality

- |   |                              |   |                   |
|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Gangster and thief           | tribal bands, ransom gangs, pillagers, cattle lifting | Gang laws         |
|   | Detection and punishment     |   |                   |
| 2 | Hired assassin               | 3 Forger  | 4 Impostor        |
| 5 | Sorcerer                     |   |                   |
| 6 | Gambler                      | gambling and betting                                  | Perils of gambler |
|   |                              | Licensing, revenue                                    |                   |
| 7 | Tavern keeper                | drinking and dissipation, liquors                     | Crime centres     |
|   |                              | Revenue   |                   |
| 8 | Brothel keeper               |   |                   |
| 9 | Prostitute                   | two categories  | Fees              |
|   |                              | Manners and morals                                    | Public esteem     |
|   | Revenue and espionage        |   |                   |
|   | The underworld and the state |   |                   |

Megasthenes and the Greek memoirists in the Macedonian army observed Indians to be habitual teetotallers and conspicuous for truthfulness and honesty. "They are not litigious. Witnesses and seals are unnecessary when a man makes a deposit, he acts in trust. Their houses are usually unguarded." In Sind, says Onesicritus, no legal action could be taken except for murder and assault. "We cannot help being murdered or assaulted, whereas it is our fault if we give our confidence and are swindled. We ought to be more circumspect at the outset and not fill the city with litigation" (Str. X. i. 709, 702).

The report derived no doubt from hearsay, or from a parochial or superficial acquaintance, militates with every piece of Indian evidence, theoretical or popular. It conflicts even with the Greek ambassador's own statement that theft from royal treasury or evasion of toll dues were punished with death. The outlaw and the underworld, anti-social institutions and foul means of livelihood ran rampant as everywhere but under sufficient cover to escape the notice of a casual observer.

1. *Gangster and thief*

In those days of insecurity, the robber was public enemy No. 1. An Aṅgulimāla was alone enough to scare a whole country like Magadha and a redoubtable King like Ajātasattu. A single brigand sufficed to terrorise a whole city (Jāt. III. 59). There were widely varied types in this class ranging from the pettiest pilferer or solitary dare-devil to the highly organised and well-armed gangs.

The bands of freebooters, notorious in the Jātakas, who infested the outlying forests (III. 220; An. I. 69) where civil authority was weak and thrived by plundering passing travellers and caravans were in reality the old settlers of the land who were dispossessed but were intractable enough to submit to the Aryan fold. These half-savage, semi-barbarous tribes—the so-called *mlecchas*, occasionally broke into the settled tracts (*paccantagāme*) of their neighbours, and from there carried off prisoners for slaves (III. 147; IV. 220).<sup>1</sup> The robbers in a robber village go to the woods to attend to a visiting king (*coragāmakavāsino corāpi rañño ārakkhatthāya araññaṃ eva pavisimsu*). The chieftain's wife goes about clad in leaves and branches (*sākhābhangam nivāsetvā carati*, Com. IV. 430 ff). They make human sacrifices to their deity (Therag. 705 ff). These tribal gangs had various methods of plundering people. They practised highway robbery and burglary (*panthadubbanasandhicchedādīni karanto jīvikam kappesi*, II. 388; *panthadūsakā*, Mil. 290) or they perpetrated gang actions on whole villages (*gāmaghatakā*; Mil. 290). Sometimes they gave an ultimatum and worked out the threat if the demand was not met (*pūrvakīṭāpadānam pratijñāya aparantam*, Arth. IV. 8). Sometimes they hit upon a novel device which gave them a new appellation (*pesanakacorā*): when they caught two prisoners interested in one another,

<sup>1</sup> The Afridis of Waziristan offer a modern parallel.



e.g., a father and a son or a teacher and a pupil, they kept one and despatched the other to fetch a ransom (Jat I 253, IV 115)

Apart from the gangs, there were individual thieves and pilferers in the settled places, people who took to criminal activity from within the town and villages (III 436, 514, Mn 13, 129) A thief after breaking into a house in a suburban village flees with his hands full of plunder (eko coro nīgaradvaragame chasmim gebe sandhim chinditva hatthasaram adaya palayitva III 33) Cattle lifting was a chosen line of the small pilferers as well as of the big gangs (I 140, IV 251, VI 335)

The strength of the gangs is conventionally given at 500 Like the industrial arts their trade was organised in village guilds of their own (coragama) with a ringleader as head (corajetthaka, I 297, II 388 IV 430) They had their own trade morals, their tribal or gang laws held sacrosanct as the laws of all guilds and races In a robber village, a cook is rebuked by a loyal and wise parrot for contemning the robber's trade (corakammam, IV 430ff) The Arthasastra lays down that transactions relating to robbery (sahasā) are valid though done at night (III 1) Quoting Kātyāyana, Vivādīnatnakāra says that thieves and robbers belonging to a guild are to divide their booty in the ratio 4 3 2 1 according to ability and if one of the gang is arrested money spent for his release is to be shared by all

To handle the crime of outlawry, the state and the public had one mām, not different from that of other ancient civilisations, viz., an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth When the people caught a suspect, rather than let justice have its own course, they preferred to take it in their own hands They "bind his hands behind his back and lead him to the place of execution scourging him in every public square with whips (pacchabham

braṇḍitva catukke catukke kaśiṇi talenta aghatanam nenti, III 436) Very often the culprit succumbed to this first deal of justice (III 514) If the man managed to reach the custodians of law and order, ruthless torture was resorted to for extorting confession (I 384) with the result that innocent people were often victimised The legend of Mandavya occurring in the Kaṇvaḍipayana Jātaka, in the Epics (Mbh I 63 92, 107) and in the Arthaśāstra (IV 8) is a classical case A thief escaped delivering his booty at the door of the ascetic, the latter, though innocent confessed his guilt from torture and was impaled Yet an unscrupulous espionage system and relentless torture are enjoined in the Arthaśāstra to deal with these crimes (IV 5, 6, 8)

After confirmation of guilt, the offender was punished by whipping, mutilation, impalement, death or other ingenious methods of torture gruesome in description (Mn 13, 129, An I 46, II 122, Sn II 128) The customary punishments for a *cora* are uprooting his eyes (*cakḥhuppatanam*), impalement on a stake (*sularopanam*), and relieving the trunk of the head (*sisacchedanam*), and these do not exhaust all (Mil 166, 185, 197) He may be thrown down from a cliff (*corapāpata*, Jāt IV 1 1) He may have his hands, feet, nose and ears cut off and drifted down a river in a canoe (II 117) Death, in any case, was his sure destiny even if the offence was so small as to pick up a parcel from the high road (V 459) Some times the people took not only the first but the final deal of justice with themselves and left a cattle lifter cutting off his hands and feet (VI 335) Megasthenes testifies to this system of torture and death sentence in the Maurya administration and Manu falls in line with the current tradition by prescribing for the thief capital punishment (IX 270), mutilation or impalement (276f, Vis V 136, Nar Intr 34, Vr XXII 17) Only the author of the

Arthaśāstra is enlightened enough to leave provision for fine which ranges from 12 to 96 *paṇas* according to the value of the articles stolen or robbed (III. 17). The pirate and the cattle-lifter alone do not deserve this leniency and have to pay the highest penalty, such a nuisance they had made of themselves (II. 29).

Was there no relief against the universal application of *lex talionis*? Even in the Jātakas were not unknown better methods of criminal investigation than forcing a suspect to disgorge guilt by torture (I. 384). We have seen a tracker of footsteps in action under a king (III. 505). The Arthaśāstra evinces the knowledge of various scientific processes like study of foot-prints and physical expressions, identification by the smell of body from a piece of rag left at the place of occurrence, etc. (IV. 6). Rāma's precept to Bharata was that a suspect should be convicted only when he is caught in action by the owner or by the police, or after cross-examination, although care should be taken that he did not obtain release by bribe (Rām. II. 57). The practice of impalement of robbers on a stake is referred to in a Jātaka story as "prevalent in those days" (III. 34), implying thereby that there might have been a change for the better when the story was crystallised. And enlightened statesmanship was not lacking like that of the counsellor who advised his king that against lawlessness and brigandage, taxation and punishment were not the right redress; the war has to be waged not against criminals but against the sources of crime, *viz.*, poverty, unemployment and discontent (Dn. V. 11).

## 2. *Hired Assassin*

Rogues might be hired for murder. Devadatta employed cut-throats (II. 416) and archers (III. 97) for the murder of Buddha. The Arthaśāstra knows such

wretches (IV 7) The hire charge for an assassination is 1,000 *kahupanas* (Jat V 126)

### 3 Forger

The forger (*pratirupakarakā*, Mbh XII 59 49) practised his evil art with false coins, gold, pearls, gems, etc. The *Arthashastra* evinces a good knowledge of his trade. A manufacturer of counterfeit coins (*lutaupakarakā*) may be suspected for frequently purchasing various kinds of metals alkalis charcoal, bellows, pincers crucible, stove and hammers, having his hands and cloth dirty with ashes and smoke or possessing such other accessory instruments.

Yam va nānūlohaśaraṇam aṅgara bhastrā śamdamsa musikadhikarānūvitam ānuśamabhikṣnam kretāram musibhaśmadhumadigdhāhastāśulingam karmaropakarāṇasam vargam lutāupakarakam manyeta

He may be betrayed by a spy getting into apprenticeship under him. The culprit is to be banished. The same procedure and penalty is prescribed against the dealer of counterfeit gold who lowers its quality with alloy (*ragasyaparīharta lutasuvarṇavyavaharī*). To utter a counterfeit coin into the treasury entails death sentence, and to deal with it, a fine of 1,000 *panas* (IV 1, Munich MS). According to *Brhaspati* forgers of gems, pearls or corals are to be tested by oath or ordeal (X 1, XXII 14).

### 4 Impostor

Sharppers and swindlers (*nelatika*, *vanecanika* Mil 290) who lived by blackmail were not as rare, nor as easily let off, as *Onesicritus* would have. A typical one is the robe tailor (*civaravaddhako*) who cheats buyers by bartering new cloth with rag made robes which 'after the dyeing was done, he would enhance in colour with a wash containing

flour to make a dressing, and rub it with a shell, till he makes it quite smart and attractive" (Jāt. I. 220). Manu is very elaborate on the ferreting out of and dealing with all kinds of cheats, both open and concealed (IX. 257-62). According to the Sāntiparva a sinful wight living by deceit is to be ostracised or killed at sight (109. 23).

### 5. Sorcerer

The impostor appeared under a special garb with his practice of black arts. A typical diviner was Vangīsa, a Brāhmana of Savatthi who used to divine by tapping a skull where its former occupant was re-born (Therag. 1209 ff. Com.). The Arthaśāstra narrates various practices of witchcraft and sorcery meant to blackmail the people (V. 2). There was, *e.g.*, the *kuhaka* and the *sambodhanakāraka* who can secure a woman's love with magical charms (IV. 4). Manu punishes sorcery with a fine of 200 *panas* (IX. 290).

### 6. Gambler

Gāmbing in dice with jugglery and stakes (Jāt. VI. 280ff) was in high favour among all classes and it was the chief pastime in the palace (I. 289f), not excluding a pious king like Yudhisthira. Besides, there were habitual or professional gamblers (*dhuttā*, *akkhadhuttā*) in every city (Dn. XVII, i. 6, 29, 32; Mn. 87). Betting or wager over animal fights, races, etc., was another common custom. A Brahmana and a merchant bet to the tune of 1,000 pieces over the capacity of a draught bull (Jāt. I. 191f). There is a wager of 5,000 over a duel between a snake and a frog. One of the betters demands and obtains a surety (*patibhoga*) from his opponent (VI. 192). Aelian says that in the ox-race where an ox is yoked to a chariot between two horses, rich men and owners of oxen heavily betted and even the spectators against each other (XV. 8).

The evils of gambling and the deterioration in social status of the addict (of course when he was a small fry) are constantly harped upon by saner counsel. According to a discourse of Buddha the addiction (*jutappamadattthanānuyoga*) is one of the six channels of dissipating wealth and is accompanied by six dangers. "As winner he (the gambler) begets hatred ; when beaten, he mourns his wealth ; his actual substance is wasted ; his word has no weight in a court of law ; he is despised by friends and officials ; he is not sought after by those who would give or take in marriage, for they would say that a man who is a gambler cannot afford to keep a wife" (*Dn. XXXI. 7, 11*). The economist's sermon goes : "The same wealth that is won like a piece of flesh in gambling, causes enmity. Lack of recognition of wealth properly acquired, acquisition of ill-gotten wealth, loss of wealth without enjoyment, staying away from answering the call of nature and contracting diseases from not taking timely meals are the evils of gambling." Again, "gamblers always play even at night by lamp-light, and even when the mother (of one of the players) is dead ; the gambler exhibits temper when spoken to in times of trouble" (*Arth. VIII. 3*). Gamblers and keepers of gambling dens are sources of disorder to the state (*Mbh. XII. 88. 14*).

To maintain law and order, to check dissipation and deterioration of public morals, state regulation of gambling was called for. The state had further motives, the primary one of drawing a good revenue and accessory purposes like detection of crime. This means that it had its own gambling houses and that it levied from players a license fee, hire charge and share of the wins ; it issued license to private dens for a heavy fee and tax on the owner ; and it uprooted all unlicensed gambling with a firm hand.

According to the *Mrcchakaṭika*, gambling houses (*tentaśāla*) licensed by the state were a feature of big towns.

In the Arthaśāstra the state itself carries on a lucrative traffic and centralises gambling through a Superintendent (dyūtādhyakṣo dyūtam ekamukhaṃ kārayet). The Superintendent levies 5 per cent. of stakes won, hire for supplying dice and other accessories, fee for supplying water and accommodation and license fee (karmakraya, II. 20). Brhaspati approves gambling and bets on prize fights (samāhvaya) with animals like birds, rams, deer, etc., because they serve the purpose of discovering thieves (XXVI. 2f). "The keeper of the gambling house shall receive the stakes and pay the victorious gambler and the king; he shall also act as witness in a dispute, assisted by three other gamblers" (*ib.* 8). Nārada has the same view on these institutions and adds that the keeper shall conduct the contests, pay the stakes won and get a profit of 10 per cent. on the wins (XVII. 1f; cf. Āpas. II. 10. 25. 12f; Yāj. II. 199f). As for private-owned dens, since the king is entitled to a share, licensing is necessary (Nār. XVII. 7f; Yāj. II. 201, 203; Śukranīti, I. Vv. 603-608). Only Manu wants gambling (dyūta) and betting (samāhvaya) to be extinguished, root and branch, and the gambler banished from the town (IX. 221-225).

### 7. Tavern-keeper

According to the Greeks the Indian diet was distinguished by the absence of wine which they took only in religious ceremonies; but rice beer was generally drunk (Str. XV. i. 709). The former part is borrowed from legal injunction or from those who observed it, the latter from a more popular practice. The drunkard (sonḍa) appears in the city side by side with the gambler (Dn. XVII. i. 6, 29, 32) dissipating wealth with the attendant six dangers (XXXI. 7f) and visiting the distiller or tavern-keeper (śaunḍikāḥ, Rām. II. 83, 15; pānāgārika, Jāt. V. 13)

who prepares and caters a large variety of intoxicating liquors (*sura-meraya-majja*, Dn. XXXI. 7). The *Arthaśāstra* enumerates a long list (II. 25). *Viṣṇu* knows of thirteen, viz., that distilled from sugar; *mādhvī* wine, that from flour, *mādhuka* wine, that from molasses, from the fruits of the *Ṭaṅka* tree, of the jujube tree, of the date-palm, of bread-fruit tree, from wine grapes, *mādhvīka* wine, *maireya* wine and the sap of cocoanut tree (XXII. 82f). According to *Manu*, *surā* is of three kinds—that distilled from molasses (*gauḍī*), that distilled from ground rice, that distilled from *madhuka* (*mahuā*) flowers (*Kullūka*) or from honey (*Medhātithi*) or from flower, honey and grape (*Nārāyana*) (*mādhvī*, XI. 95). According to the same commentators, *vārunī* is a special quality of *gauḍī* and *mādhvī* (XI. 147). In popular parlance such technical distinctions were not always observed and *surā* and *vārunī* appear as of entirely different qualities. "A trader in spirits (*vārunī-vaṇijo*) having prepared fiery spirits (*tikhinā-vārunī*) and selling them, having received gold *suvaṇṇas*, etc., a number of people being gathered together (at the shop), he went in the evening to bathe, bidding his apprentice (*antevāsika*) in these words: "My man, do you, having taken the price (*mūlam*), give the spirits" (*Jāt. I. 251*).<sup>1</sup> This shows the popularity and dearness of *vārunī* especially of the strong brand in comparison with the *surā* which could be bought for a copper coin (I. 350).

The tavern was not only the main attraction for the dissipation of the wealthier classes, it was the breeder of crimes and the favourite haunt of criminals (V. 13). Cut-throats and thieves, after finishing their operations indulge in drinking bouts (II. 417, 427). Two tipplers drug spirits to rob the drunkards (*sāvatthiyam surādhuttā sannipatitvā mantayimsu*, I. 269). With the gambling house, the

<sup>1</sup> See the rendering by Mrs. Rhys Davids in *J R A S.*, 1901, pp. 876f. *loc. cit.* as opposed to Chalmers' in the Cambridge Edn.



brewery appears as a centre of civil disorder (Mbh. XII. 88. 14). Hence sale of liquor is among disreputable professions (295. 5f) and the seller is to be banished by the king from his town (Manu, IX. 225).

As a matter of fact such stern measures were very rarely taken. For like the gambling house, the tavern yielded profit and could be similarly used as a tool for espionage. The village lord who mourns the loss to his perquisites by the abstemious habits of his folk (Jāt. I. 199) may well have taken his cue from the state, and the other who forbids the sale of liquor in his village was a rare one in his class as exemplar of Buddhist piety (IV. 115). All the state (or its agents and parallels) did was to restrict or monopolise the traffic. In the Arthaśāstra the state itself is the biggest wine merchant. Others carrying on the trade have to obtain license and pay a heavy toll. Drinking is strictly regulated and is not allowed outside the booths which are set up at big intervals. State shops also serve as auxiliary to the espionage system (II.25). According to the Sukranīti the drinking house has to obtain king's license (I. v. 604).

### 8. Brothel-keeper

With the brewery, the brothel was in happy company with its brood of crimes and criminals (Mbh. XII. 88. 14). The pimp (strīvyavahārī) trading with the virtues of woman (Arth. II. 27 ; kuṇḍāśī, Mbh. XIII. 90. 7) and keeper of dancing girls (vaidehaka, raṅgastrījīvī, Mbh. XII. 37. 31) thrived eminently as parasite professions spreading crime and disease, bringing income to the state and serving as agents of the police.

### 9. Prostitute

The prostitute was the nadir of the underworld in whom all the vices and vicious institutions converged. She might

belong to different scales according as she was the *nagarasobhanā* or *ganika* or as she was a *vannadāsī* (Jat II 367ff). The former was the chief courtesan, literally 'the beauty of the town,' surrounded by a retinue of harlots in her establishment (*Sulasa nāmā nāgarasobhanā pañcasata vannadāsī parivārahosi*, III 435). The courtesan *Kalī* had a similar retinue (IV. 248). *Ambapālīka* of *Vesālī* and *Salavatī* of *Rājagṛha* belonged to this rank (Mv VIII 13). The 500 *vannadāsīs* and the 16,000 dancing girls (*solasabassa nītakittinīyo*) in the king's suite (III 365, V 190, 486) were of the same plebeian category. The *Arthśāstra* classifies *ganikas* into those attached to royal court and public prostitutes (II 27).

The customary fee for the chief courtesan of the town is 1,000 *kahapanas* for a visit or a night (III 59, 435, 475, IV 248). The *Arthśāstra* fixes 1,000 *panas* as the salary of the chief courtesan in king's service, probably per mensem. But this is only a conventional sum. *Ambapālīka* charges 50 for one night and *Salavatī* 100 (Mv VIII 1,3), we do not know whether in silver, gold or copper pieces. At the bottom of the scale, the lowest fee was a piece of betel (*tambulamattam*, II 309, 379).

Further glimpse is obtained from the *Jātakas*, into the customs, manners and morals of the ill-famous houses. The fashion in the quarter of *Kalī* was that out of the 1,000 pieces received, 500 were for the women, 500 the hire charge of clothes, perfumes and garlands. The visitors received and put on garments for the night, the next day donned their own and went away.

*Tasmim pana ganikaghare idam carittam abhatam sahasṣato, pañca satam ganikayā honti, pañca satam vatthagandhamālamulam honti, agārapurisa tasmim ghare laddhavattham nivasetvā rattim vasitvā punadivise gacchanti nivasetvā abhatavattham eva nivasetvā gacchanti* IV 249

Another is very strict about her fees. A merchant's son spends on her 80 crores of money, yet one day when he comes empty handed he is cast out by the neck (III 475). On the other hand the prostitute had her own codes of professional morality. Her code of honour dictates that after receiving contract from a suitor, she must not go with another for any offer. A prostitute, true to this standard, is an exemplar of Kuru piety and enunciates this in accordance with the ethics of her profession (II 379). Another had fallen from better days because the lesson was lost upon her. "She used formerly to take a price from the hand of one not to go with another until she had made him enjoy his money's worth, and that is how she used to receive much. Now she has changed her manner and without leave of the first she goes with the last, so that she receives nothing, and none seeks after her. If she keeps to her old custom, it will be as it was before."

Sa gaṇika pubbe ekassa batthato bhatim gahetvā tam ajirapetva anurassa batthato na ganhati, ten' assa pubbe bahum upajji idam paṇa attano dhammatam vissajjetvā ekassa batthato gahitam ajirapetva va aññassa batthato ganhati, purimassa okāsam akatvā pacchimassa karoti, ten' assa bhati na uppajjati, na keci naṃ upasamkhamanti, sace attano dhamme thassati pubbe sādasi va bhavissati, II 309

In certain passages, a prostitute's profession appears as the meanest of vocations. One of the class wails abramhi nagare pāṭaliputte gaṇika rupupajjivim antimaṇvika (Mil 123). Sama knows that in spite of her rate of 1,000 she is hated for her vile trade (nicakammam, Jat III 60). But these give a partial view of the social psychology. The reputation of Videha was as much in its 16,000 girls as in its 16,000 villages and storehouses (III 365, V 190). The chief courtesan was the pride of the city, the focus

of its aesthetics, as Sulasā was of Bārānasi, Ambapālīkā was of Vesālī and Sālavatī was of Rājagaha.

"There was also the courtesan Ambapālīkā who was beautiful, graceful, pleasant, gifted with the highest beauty of complexion, well-versed in dancing, singing and lute-playing, much visited by desirous people. She asked 50 for one night. Through her Vesālī became more and more flourishing."

Ambapālīkā ganikā abhirūpā hoti dassanīyā pāsādīkā paramāya vannapokkharatāya samannāgatā padakkhimā nacce ca gite ca vādite ca abhisaṭṭha atthikānam manussānam paññasāya ca rattim gacchatī tāya ca vesālī bhijjyosomattāya uposobhatī. *Mv.* VIII. 1.

Finding Rajagaha outdone by Vesālī Seniya Bimbisāra installed a beautiful and accomplished girl Sālavatī as courtesan, through whom Rājagaha gradually flourished. She charged 100 for one night (*ib.* 3). The chief courtesan of the state, according to the *Arthasāstra*, is selected with sole consideration to beauty and accomplishments and she is trained up to all the artistic and musical proficiencies (II 27).<sup>1</sup>

Of course the state was interested in the traffic. It had use both for the glamorous nymph and for the street girl. They attracted rich men and, with them, business and prosperity. They were employed for sundry purposes. The king of Anga enticed the young recluse Rasyaśrnga by means of a troupe of courtesans (*Rām.* I. 11). They formed an important part in the ceremonials. The *ganikās* along with minstrels and instrument players are to go out and receive Rama on his return from exile (VI. 129 3). "They shall pay every month twice the amount of a day's earning to the government." Above all they are the most effective agents of the secret police (*Arth.* II. 27).

<sup>1</sup> The *ganikā* of the *Arthasāstra* and the *Kāmasāstra* resembles very much the Japanese Geisha, the cultured society girl trained in the arts of entertainment.

Such was the vicious circle of outlaws and undesirables of society, the *gūḍhājīvīs* who are to be suppressed with fines, banishment, espionage and torture (Arth. IV. 5, 6, 8). The bandit, the cut-throat, the swindler, the gambler and the debauch were bedfellows of the underworld and their rendezvous were the tavern, the brothel and the gambling den. The oft-quoted trio—wine, women and dice—were centres of crime and civil disorder (Sut. 106; Rām. II. 70. 41; Mbh. III. 13. 7; XII. 59. 60; 88. 14; 93. 17). The civil authority took little pains to wipe out these plague-spots. While crimes of violence (*sāhasa*) were dealt with a ruthless application of *lex talionis*, crimes of immorality were connived at for the sake of revenue and the vicious purposes of an unscrupulous secret service. The state had yet to learn the chaplain's maxim that crime cannot be controlled by taxation and torture and that institutions thriving upon public immorality undermine the basic fabric of the state.

**BOOK VI**  
**SOCIAL PHYSIOGNOMY**

Sa kho so, bhikkhave, bālo sace kadāci karahaci dighassa addhuno accayena manussattam āgacchati, yāni tāni nīcakulāṃ caṇḍālakulāṃ vā nesādakulāṃ vā veṇakulāṃ vā rathakārakulāṃ vā pukkusakulāṃ vā—tathārūpe kule paccājayati daḷidde apannapānabhojane kasiravattike, yattha kasirena ghāsacchādo labbhati. So ca hoti dubbaṇṇo duddasiko okoṭimako bavhābādho kāṇo vā kuni vā khañjo vā pakkahato vā, na lābhī annassa pānassa vatthassa yānassa mālāgandhavilepanassa seyyāvasathapadīpeyyassa ; so kāyena duccharitaṃ carati vācāya duccharitaṃ carati manasā duccharitaṃ carati ; so kāyena duccharitaṃ caritvā.....kāyassa bhedaṃ param maraṇā apāyaṃ duggatiṃ vinipātāṃ nirayaṃ upajjati : .....

Sa kho so, bhikkhave, paṇḍito sace kadāci karahaci dighassa addhuno accayena manussattam āgacchati, yāni tāni uccakulāni—khattiyamahāsālakulāṃ vā brāhmaṇamahāsālakulāṃ vā gahapatimahāsālakulāṃ vā—tathārūpe kule paccājayati aḍḍhe mabaddhane mahābhoge pahutajātarūparājate pahutavittūpakaraṇe pahutadhanadhāññe ; so ca hoti abhirūpo dassanīyo pāsādiko paramāya vaṇṇapokkharatāya samannāgato, lābhī annassa pānassa vatthassa yānassa mālāgandhavilepanassa seyyāvasathapadīpeyyassa ; so kāyena sucaritaṃ carati, vācāya sucaritaṃ carati, manasā sucaritaṃ carati ; so kāyena sucaritaṃ caritvā.....kāyassa bhedaṃ param maraṇa sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upajjati.

—Bālapaṇḍitasutta, Majjhima-nikāya.

A fool, should he become a human being after the lapse of a very long time, he comes into one of the low stocks—caṇḍālas, nesādas, veṇas, rathakāras and pukkusas, he is reborn to a life of vagrancy, want and penury, scarce getting food and drink for his stomach or clothes to his back.

He grows up ill-favoured and unsightly, misshapen, a weakling, blind or deformed, or lame or a cripple ; he gets no food, drink and clothes, nor carriage, garlands, scents and perfumes ; he misconducts himself in act, word and thought ; his misconduct brings him at the body's dissolution after death to a state of misery and woe or to purgatory.....

A wise man, should he become a human being after the lapse of a very long time, he comes into one of the high stocks,—Khattiyas, Brāhmanas or Gahapatis, he is reborn to a life of affluence, riches and wealth with abundance of gold and coins of silver, and with abounding substance and abounding possessions. He grows up well-favoured and well-looking, with loveliest complexion, with plenty of food and drink and clothes and carriages and garlands and scents and perfumes ; he conducts himself aright in act, word and thought and his right conduct brings him at the body's dissolution after death to well-being and satisfaction in heaven.



## CHAPTER I

### SLAVE LABOUR

Origin : Prisoner of war. Inherited. Born. Purchased. Gift. Mortgaged. Judicial punishment. Apostate. For food. Debtor. Voluntary. By wager. Growth of slavery. Manumission.

Functions : Personal attendance. Domestic service. Industrial establishments Working for hire. Prostitution of female slaves.

Code of relation Legal position Social position

Actual treatment : Chain and whip. ' Slave's fare.' Run-away slave. Freed slave.

The slave and the slave class. The Ārya slave and the Śūdra slave. Indian and Western slavery.

' Dāsa,' the Indian word for a slave is used in the  
 Origin. R̥gveda synonymously with ' dasyu ' in  
 the sense of enemies of the Aryans (V. 34.  
 6; VI. 22. 10; 33. 3; 60. 6; VII. 83. 1; Av. V. 11.3).  
 The *dāsavarṇa* (Rv. I. 101. 1; 130.8; II. 12.4; 20.7; IV.  
 16. 13; VI. 47. 21; VII. 5. 3) and *āryavarṇa* (III. 34. 9)  
 allude to the aborigines and the Aryan invaders with  
 reference to their respective complexions.<sup>1</sup> The difference  
 in religion between the two sets of people is also very  
 frequently noted (I. 33. 4f; IV. 16. 9; V. 7. 10; 42. 9;  
 VI. 14. 3; VIII. 70.10; X. 22. 7f). These conquered  
 aboriginals must have often been reduced to slavery and  
 hence the new application of the word ' dāsa ' in the sense  
 of a slave (VII. 86.7; VIII. 56. 3; X. 62. 10; Av.  
 IV. 9. 8; Ch. Up. VII. 24. 2). In the Atharvaveda ' dāsi '  
 is used in this sense (V. 22. 6; XII. 3. 13; 4.9; Ch. Up.  
 V. 13.2; Br. Up. VI. 1.10). " Aboriginal women no

<sup>1</sup> This is sometimes directly mentioned. ' Kṛṣṇa tvac,'—Rv. I. 130.8; IX. 41.1;  
 ' svitnya,'—I. 100. 18; ' aboratra ' as analogous to ' śūdraryau,' not of course in direct  
 order—Vāj. Sam. XXIV. 30. Cf. in the Majjhima (93)—' d'ēva vaṇṇā ayyo c'eva  
 dāso ca' in the Yona and Kamboja countries.

doubt were the usual slaves, for on their husbands being slain in battle they would naturally have been taken as servants.'<sup>1</sup>

Thus in India, as elsewhere, slavery originated from the earliest laws of war. "The vanquished is the victor's slave—such is the law of war" (Mbh. IV. 33.59f).<sup>2</sup> Those made captive under a standard are among the different types of slaves enumerated in Manu, the Arthasāstra and Nārada (bhvajābṛta, —Manu, VIII. 415; Arth. III. 13; Nār. V. 27). Prisoners captured in raids are one of the three varieties known in the Vinaya-pitaka (karamarānito, BbikV-Sam. 1.2.1). In the Jātakas brigands are seen harrying a border village and going off with their prisoners (coresu paccantagāmam paharitvā karamare gahetvā gacchantesu, III. 147; IV. 220). In the Mahāsutasoma Jātaka, Sutasoma is afraid that Brahmaddatta of Benares would enslave the captured princes.<sup>3</sup>

These people, if they happened to survive their master, did not recover their freedom but were inherited banded down to the legitimate heir along with other properties of the master. This is another variety of slave noticed by the law-givers (paitika, —Manu; dāyāgata, —Arth., Nār.) and the practice is fully borne out by other evidences.

The child born of a female slave in the house of a master became a slave to the same master.  
This is alluded to as *grhaja* or *udaradāsa* in Manu, the Arthasāstra and Nārada and as *antojāto* in

<sup>1</sup> Macdonell and Keith *Vedic Index*, Vol I, p 357

<sup>2</sup> In the same vein the Pandavas speak to the captive Jayadratha in the Vana parva

<sup>3</sup> Among the four kinds of slaves enumerated elsewhere appear those driven by fear (bhaya panunnapi, Jat VI, 285) Perhaps in those times and places when and where aggression and brigandage were not uncommon, the weaker people occasionally sought a benevolent and powerful master for protection against 'the laws of the jungle.'

the Vinaya passage. Vidura the king's councillor enumerates this among the four kinds of slaves (*amayadāsa*,—Jāt. VI 285) and he himself is a specimen. The Jātakas give other instances of 'home-born' slaves (I. 452, VI. 110).

We came to a later stage of development when slaves could be purchased for money (*krīta*,—  
 4 Purchased                      Manu, Arth, Nār.; *dhanakkīto*,—Vin  
*dhanena kīta*,—Jāt VI. 285). In the Jātakas '*satena kītadāsa*' is a stock phrase indicating that 100 *kahāpanas* is the conventional price of a slave (I 224, 209) 700 *kahāpanas* are "enough to buy slaves male and female" (*alam me ettakam dhanam dāsīdāsamulāya*, III. 343).

Manu and Nārada recognise slavery by gift. In the  
 5 Gift                              Vesāntara Jātaka an exiled prince gives  
 away his wife and children to a suitor  
 (VI 546). Such pious demonstrations were undoubtedly rare

According to the Arthaśāstra and Nārada one could be  
 6 Mortgaged                      pledged or mortgaged to slavery. The  
 state of mortgage continued till the debt  
 was cleared. Of course the sale, gift or mortgage was open only to the rightful owner of a person, *i.e.*, to the master of a slave, to a husband, to a father or to kinsmen of a minor.

Perhaps a farther stage is revealed with enslavement by judicial punishment. This practice  
 7 Judicial punish-                      does not appear in the lists of Vinaya or  
 ment                              of the Vidura-pandita Jātaka. Manu  
 refers to it as '*dandadāsa*' and the Arthaśāstra as '*dandapranīta*'<sup>1</sup>. The commentators on Manu explain it as "because one cannot pay a debt or a fine." The Arthaśāstra lays down that a person enslaved by court decree

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *dandapratīkār*, II, 24

shall earn that amount by work (*dandapranītaḥ karmanā dandamupanayet*), i.e., the culprit must earn and pay by hard labour the fine he is sentenced to. It is not made clear in any of the two passages whether this service is to be rendered to the state or to the sufferer. This form of penal servitude was certainly temporary expiring as soon as the fine or decree was worked off. But in the *Jātakas* there are instances of 'life sentence' too. In the *Kulāvaka Jātaka* a *gāmabhojaka* is reduced to slavery by the king's decree for bringing malicious charges against his people (I. 200). In the *Mahā-ummagga Jātaka* the king commutes death-sentence of four mischievous councillors and condemns them to slavery (VI. 463).

Nārāyana and Nandana extend the *dandadāsa* of 8 Apostate. Manu to include those who are sentenced to slavery for leaving a religious order. Viṣṇu emphatically declares: "An apostate from religious mendicancy shall become the king's slave" (V. 152). According to Nārada such an apostate is never to be emancipated (V. 35; Yāj. II. 183). But we have no concrete instances of such measures in the *Jātakas*. Obviously these pious rules were difficult to enforce and they reflect only a growing tendency against which the law-givers strove in vain.

Manu and Nārada specify slaves serving for food. 9 For food Nārada says that this type of slave is released on giving up the subsistence. But this being the condition his status differs very little from the labourer working for hire and paid with food (*bhataka*). Apparently the status of slavery was sometimes preferred by a pauper to that of a hireling whose position, it will be seen, was sometimes worse than that of his brethren.

It is clear that as want and starvation became acute, people sold their freedom for maintenance. Nārada's list

accordingly includes one taking to bondage for food in time of famine.

From Nārada it appears that a debtor might have had to serve his creditor as slave until the payment of the debt with interest (V. 33). Theri Isidāsī, born as daughter of a poor carter, heavily encumbered with debts, was carried off as slave by a merchant in lieu of interest.

10 Debtor      kapanamhi appabboge dhanikapurisapātabahulamhi<sup>1</sup>      443  
 tam mam tato satthavāho ussannāya vipulāya vaddhiyā<sup>2</sup>  
 okaḍḍhati vilapantiṃ acchinditvā kulagharassa      444  
 —Therigāthā

From the commentatorial note on 'dandadāsa' in Manu it appears that this service might also be exacted in lieu of a debt (also Mbh. XII. 109. 18).

Voluntary enslavement is noticed in the Arthaśāstra (sakrdātṁādhatā) and in Nārada. It is referred to also in the Sumangala Vilāsini (I. 168) and in the Vidura-pañḍita Jātaka (sayam pi upayanti dāsa). The motives of such self-degradation might be manifold. It might be done as penance (Jāt. VI. 87). It might be done to save somebody else's life or freedom (VI. 135). Evidently such cases were rare.

'Won through wager' is another kind of slave in Nārada. In the Majjhima nikāya there is a passage which says that a gambler by throwing a low cast with the dice loses son, wife, all his possessions and finally goes himself into bondage (129). One is immediately reminded of the classic (but by no means solitary) instance of Draupadī in the notorious dice contest in the Mahābhārata (cf. I. 16. 20).

<sup>1</sup> jñāyikāsuṃ purisaṇaṃ adhipatanabāhule bahūhi jñāyikehi abhivṛṇṇatubbe  
 Paramatthadīpanī.

<sup>2</sup> upaḍḍhiyā Ibid

and fetch the fan and how he would minister to the master when he retired (I. 453). Among the 'impure work' which is reserved for slaves according to Nārada is 'rubbing the master's limbs when desired' (V. 7). They served also as bathing attendants (*ib.* 6; Arth. III. 13; Jāt. I. 383).

Apart from personal attendance, the domestic slave did

all other menial work of the household.

Domestic service

A very common function of a female slave is pounding and winnowing of rice (I. 248; II. 428; III. 350) and spreading out the rice in the sun (I. 484). He or she is also seen clearing the leavings of food (Nār. V. 6; Jāt. IV. 145); sweeping the yards and stables (Nār. V. 5; Jāt. VI. 138); cleansing the bathing tank (Jāt. I. 484); fetching water (V. 284, 412); going on errands (I. 350).

Generally female slaves were maintained for domestic

Industrial and Agri-  
cultural establish-  
ments

work. All the cases cited above except Kaṭāhaka (and Jāt. I. 350) were women (also Mn. 82). For outdoor work men

were employed. The king's slaves served in the industrial and agricultural establishments of the state (Arth. II. 24) or fought in his array (Rām. II. 84. 7; Jāt. V. 412); private slaves plied in the big and small agricultural estate and industrial enterprise.

The institution of slavery was not as innocent as it

Hiring out of slaves

would appear from the functions of a slave enumerated above. In the Nāma-

siddhi Jātaka is a scene of a master and a mistress beating their slave for she had not brought home her wages (*ekam dāsīm bhatim adadamānam*, I. 402). It would appear that the master might let out the services of the slave on hire and thus make a profitable business out of him or her, since the slave had no right to earn and own property. In the *paccupannavatthu* of the Māṃsa Jātaka even the slaves of *bhikkhus* go to town to get dainty fare for their sick masters (III. 49).

Another evil feature was that the female slaves were very often kept for enjoyment, avowed or surreptitious. Sometimes it is difficult to demarcate them from prostitutes and concubines. In the primitive concepts of social ethics this was the natural destiny for the wives and daughters of one slain in battle or made captive in war. Instances of slave women bearing child to their masters come from the later Vedic literature down to the Arthasāstra and the Jātakaṣ (Ait. Br. II. 19; Kauṣ. Br. XII. 3; Arth. III. 13; Jāt. IV. 145, 299). The king's female slaves are to serve as bath-room attendants, shampooers, bedding room servants, washer-women and flower garland-makers (snāpaka-saṃrāhak'-āstaraka-rajaka-mālākarakarma dasyaḥ kuryuh, Arth. I. 21). Prostitutes and female slaves incapable of providing enjoyment to king (bhagnabhogā) are to be employed in the stores or kitchen. Female slaves are trained along with royal prostitutes in the arts of entertainment and feminine wiles (II. 27). In the public taverns it was not an extraordinary spectacle to find a *dāsī* with blooming youth and beauty (peśalarūpā) lying in intoxication with her master (II. 25). This was the natural social consequence emerging out of the maintenance of large number of women slaves within the household.<sup>1</sup>

The code of treatment of a slave by a master and of reciprocal duties and relations as formulated in didactic pieces is fairly enlightened and high. In the words of Buddha  
 Code of treatment      slaves and servants form the nadir  
    (hetthimā dīsā) among the six quarters  
 that the Aryan master has to protect; and (1) he assigns

<sup>1</sup> It might of course happen, although very rarely, that a master gives the status of wife or daughter in law to his female slave (Amba P. Com. IV. 12; Therīg., 446). On the reverse the Jātakaṣ furnish instances of the master's wife and daughter falling in love with or marrying their male slave.

them work according to their strength (*yathābalaṃ kam-manta-samvidhānena*), (2) supplies them with food and wages (*bhatta-vetanānuppadānena*), (3) tends them in sickness (*gilānu paṭṭhānena*), (4) shares with them unusual delicacies (*acchariyānaṃ rasānaṃ samvibhāgena*), (5) grants leave at times (*samaye vossaggena*).<sup>1</sup> The slaves and workmen respond to such good ministration in five ways: (1) they rise before him, (2) they lie down to rest after him, (3) they are content with what is given to them, (4) they do their work well, (5) they carry about his praise and good fame. (Dn. XXXI. 27). Aśoka exhorts the proper treatment of slaves and hirelings along with friends and relatives as consonant with *dhamma* (R. E. XIII). According to Manu, the master's duty is to give funeral *piṇḍa* to the sonless slaves and to maintain them when old and weak. The Sūdra, on the other hand, must never leave his master whatever may be his sufferings. He should maintain his master besides his own family when the latter suffers a loss of wealth (*dravya-parikṣaye*, XII. 60. 35f). He stands in respectable company with parents, brother, children, daughter-in-law and female relatives of his master with whom a Snātaka should never have quarrels (IV. 180). A slave is as one's shadow whose offence the master should bear without resentment as of his brother, wife, son and daughter (IV. 184f). According to the Arthaśāstra those who do not heed the claims of their slaves, hirelings and relatives shall be taught their duty (II. 1).

The fundamental fact of the legal position of the slave was his complete loss of *persona*. He was the master's chattel as much as oxen, buffaloes, gold and silver (Jāt. I. 341), or as oxen, gold, garments, sandal-wood, horses, treasures, jewels, etc. (V. 223). The master had the right to recover him if he ran

<sup>1</sup> Constant relaxation so that they need not work all day, and special leave with extra food and adornment for festivals, etc.—Buddhaghosa, Cf. Jāt III. 435.



away (I. 451, 458) or disposed himself to another master (Nār. V. 40). He had the right to make a bequest of him to another (Jāt. VI. 138). He was just as Vidura, the councillor, describes himself.: "I am a slave from my birth; my weal and woe come from the king, I am the king's slave even if I go to another, he may give me by right to thee."

Addhā pi yonito aham pi jāto  
bhavo ca rañño abhavo ca rañño  
dās'aham devassa param pi gantvā  
dhammena maṃ māṇava tuyham dajjā ti,  
VI. 285

As will be seen below the master could take the life of his slave with impunity.

A slave can have no property (Manu, XII. 60. 37; VIII. 416f), i.e., he cannot earn money by working for others (adhigacchanti parakarma-karaṇādina, —Nārāyana). Whatever he earns belongs to his master (Mbh. I. 82. 22ff; V. 33. 63; Nār. V. 41). The doors of the Saṃgha were closed to him (Mv. I. 46). He could not enter an agreement unless authorised (Arth. III. 1). He could not stand as witness except in case of failure of qualified witnesses (Manu, VIII. 66, 70).

These legal disabilities do not discord with the idealised relation between a master and a slave outlined above which ignores any right on behalf of the slave. Nor does his inferior social status. In Manu and in the Sāntiparva (242. 20) he appears as an integral part of the master's family,<sup>1</sup> deserving of treatment similar to the members of the household. If a slave sometimes figures in the less respectable company of cows, mares, she-camels, she-buffaloes, she-goats and ewes (of which the issue belongs to the owner of the mother,—Manu,

<sup>1</sup> Also Mbh V. 23. 15, 30 39, Jāt II. 428; III. 167.

IX. 48; cf. Jāt. I. 341; V. 223), this is no paradox. For the *magna familia* of the Aryan householder embraced within its fold these domestic animals as much as the slaves. Animals had as much claim to kind treatment as slaves (Aśoka's R. E. XIII) and neither had the social status of the other members of the family. This is shown in characteristic fashion in the Nānacchanda Jātaka. Puṇṇā, the female slave is offered a boon along with the master, the mistress, the son and the daughter-in-law. While they ask for a village, 100 milch cows, a car and ornaments, she for a pestle, a mortar and a winnowing basket (II. 428).

This Puṇṇā receives from her master the epithet—'jammī,' meaning 'the low, contemptible.' 'Thou wilt be a slave,'<sup>2</sup> is a serious form of curse (Mbh. I. 16. 19ff). *Dāsiputta* is a universal term of abuse (Jāt. I. 225; III. 233; IV. 41). King Vidudabha is insulted as the 'son of a slave-girl' even by a slave woman (IV. 145). Children of slave-girls by their masters did not get over this stigma.<sup>1</sup> Mahānāma the Sākya cannot dine with his daughter Vāsavakbattiyā by the slave Nagamuṇḍā. Bodhisatta, as king's chaplain, disports with a slave-girl, but cannot give his family name to the bastard born to him (IV. 298).

- \* The legal and social position of the slave being what it was, his habitual lot was not to be petted and fondled like a foster child. The slave Kaṭāhaka learnt writing with his master and "two or three handicrafts (vohāre) and grew up to be a fair-spoken and handsome youngman" (*vacanakusalo yuvā abhirūpo ahoṣi*). Brought up in the refinements of his master's house, he could successfully pose abroad as his master's son. With a master like Bodhisatta such treatment is intelligible, but even with such a master, the slave could not escape the fear that "at the slightest fault

Treatment: chain and whip.

<sup>1</sup> Ast. Br. II. 12; Kasy. Br. XII. 8

he shall be beaten, chained, branded and fed in slave's fare" (tālītvā bandhitvā lakṣhanena añketvā dāsapari-bhogena pi paribhuñjissanti, I. 451). It is wonderful that Mrs. Rhys Davids finds only two instances of actual ill-treatment in Buddhist literature,<sup>1</sup> the one where a slave tires the temper of her mistress by persistent late-rising and is struck in the head with a lynchpin causing bleeding (Mn. 21); the other where a girl is beaten with rope by her master and mistress for not bringing home her wages (Jāt. I. 402 f). In Buddha's discourse slaves and servants are said to be obeying the inhuman orders of a king harried by stripes and fears (daṇḍatajjitā bhayatajjitā. Mn. 51; Sn. I. 75). "Men acquire men as slaves and by beating, binding and by otherwise subjugating them make them work day and night. These people are not ignorant of the pain that is caused by beating and chains."

Mānuṣā mānuṣāneva dāsabhāvena bhuñjati  
 Vadhabandha nirodhena kārayanti divānīsam  
 Ātmanaścāpi jānāti yadduḥkhaṃ vadhabandhane,  
 Mbh. XII. 261. 38f.

The cruel master in the Vessantara Jātaka ties the hands of the boy and the girl with a creeper and holding it tight beats them and drives them on. "Where he struck them the skin was cut, the blood ran, when struck, they staggered against each other back to back"<sup>2</sup> (VI. 546f). In the Rajjumaḷa-vimāna (Vimānavatthu) occurs the doleful sketch of a maid-servant who was abused right and left and when she grew up, had a liberal deal of blows and fisticuffs. She was taken by the hair for slaps and kicks. She tried to escape with a shave but it made her lot worse. The mistress was aroused at her tonsured poll.

<sup>1</sup> Camb. Hist., Ch VIII, p 205

<sup>2</sup> There is a perceptible element of exaggeration to make a perfect villain of the Brahmana and demonstrate the piety and fortitude of the prince who is a Bodhisatta.

class which served as drudge to the higher orders. In this light is to be read the injunction of Manu that a Sūdra, even if set free, is not released from servitude—"for who can take away that which is inborn in him?"

The slave and the  
slave class Ārya and  
Sūdra slave.

(VIII. 4-14). This also explains the two sets of rules, seemingly contradictory, in the Dharmaśāstras and in the Arthaśāstra. Those very 'impure works' (sweeping ordure, urine, leavings of food; attending to the master while naked), which Nārada assigns to a slave, are prohibited for him in the Arthaśāstra. While Manu and Nārada countenance no rights of property for a slave, the Arthaśāstra allows him to earn, own and inherit property. Even after his death, his kinsmen have the priority of claim on his property over the master. Sale and mortgage into slavery are laid under severe stricture. Chastity of a female slave is meticulously guarded not only against the master but against royal officers and every debauch with heavy fine and violation entitles her to freedom (i.e., forfeiture of value on the part of the master,—*mūlyanāśa*).

While Manu declares that a Sūdra is not released from servitude by being set free, the Arthaśāstra rules that an Ārya does not lose his birth-right (*āryabhāva*) even if enslaved. If it is true that in the latter the Sūdra is not a distinctly separated category from the Ārya as in the former but a part of it, that only indicates that the Sūdra of the Arthaśāstra is not the same class as the Sūdra of Manu. It is remarkable that the liberal rules of the Arthaśāstra are confined to the one and the main chapter (*dāsakalpa*) and its cursory references elsewhere do not adhere to the same enlightened principles. These latter were applicable to large classes of people who stood between the border lines of the Sūdra and Mleccha groups, i.e., who were neither absorbed within nor kept in complete isolation from the Aryan social organism. The privilege accrued to the upper classes

degraded to slavery, the Āryas proper. The instance of the Vessantara Jātaka is a clear proof of this proposition. The prince, who gives her daughter to slavery, puts a high price on her lest a low-born should pay it and 'break her birth-right' (jāṭisambhedana kāreyya).

In the Arthaśāstra, the Mlecchas are expressly kept out of the privileges. The suggestion readily occurs that they formed the bulk of slavery. But certainly a Mleccha could not be put into a job which brought him into personal contact with an Aryan master. It appears that Sūdras, i.e., the lowest of the Aryan fold or the aborigines who became an appendage to the Aryan system, supplied the mass of slave labour, not the Mlecchas of whom even the sight and air were reprehensible, nor the upper orders who were occasionally relegated by freaks of fortune. This is why in Manu and in the didactic episodes of the Epics, *dāsa* and *sūdra* go synonymously. This is why 'dāsa' is so often distinctly referred to as a *jāti*, i.e., a class by birth and not a functional group.

The actual condition and life of this class, though not enviable, was better than that of the slaves of ancient Greece and Italy or of the late 'white plantations.' When Megasthenes said that the Indians do not employ slaves, he only brought forth this contrast. C/ Western slavery Unlike those countries again, the number of slaves in India, though large, was a fraction of the labouring class. The work of degrading manual labour was shared between the slave, the free hired labourer and a host of Mlecchas and *hīnajātis*. Hence in India the basis of economic life was not slavery and the Eastern analogy of the slave of Rome and Sparta in all-round exploitation was not the *dāsa* but the last of the classes mentioned above.

## CHAPTER II

### HIRED LABOUR

Free Labour —agricultural and pastoral; industrial, mercantile; domestic, miscellaneous Origin in pauperism Modes of payment. Degradation and devaluation of labour Wage and Profit rates Free contract? Terms of hire Slave labour and hired labour The Labourer and the Outcast Paucity of labour unrest

In the scale of economic gradation the hired labourer stood just below the slave. Leaving aside the better artisans who were more or less organised in guilds and had the instruments of collective bargaining to secure good terms of agreement, the unskilled 'hands' are found distributed in five categories.

While the small farmer carried on agricultural operations single-handed or with the co-operation of the family, a remarkable division of agricultural labour and employment of operatives in large numbers is noticeable in the big estates of solvent landowners. In the Pali literature they are seen working in diminutive gangs under big merchants and farmers, such as for example under the cattle-magnate Dhaniya of the Suttanipāta (I. 2. Com.) and the agriculturist Kāsi-bhāradvāja in the same work (I. 4; cf. Sn. I. 171; Jāt. IV. 276). The Sākya and the Koliya clans appear in the *paccupannavatthu* of the Kunāla Jātaka as working their estates jointly by means of a horde of *dāsas* and *kammakaras*—bondsmen who had no standing in the corporate body holding a position akin to serfs and villains of feudal society (V. 412).<sup>1</sup> The mass of slaves and hired labour in agricultural work were employed separately for

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 23,

tillage, field-watching, harvesting, tending and grazing cattle and-for dairy production. There were professional ploughmen (kasim katvā jīvikam kappentassa, Jāt. II. 165; bhatim vā kasim vā katvā laddhavibhavānurūpena yagubhattā-dīni sampādetvā pitaram posesi, IV. 43); field-watchers who had huts built close by the field and had their meals there and dwelt there day and night (Jāt. III. 52; IV. 276; Sn. IV. 195f); and even winnowers of grain available for hire.

Hired labour appears side by side with slave labour also in spinning, weaving or other manufactures whether in state establishments or with private owners. Instances of the former are furnished in the Arthasāstra (II. 23). In a Jātaka story we come across a tailor in the employ of a merchant (setṭhim nissāya vasantassa tunnakārassa tunnakammena jīvissāma, Jāt. IV. 38).

The slave and hireling were employed in mercantile and marine labour to hawk the wares of the master or to serve in the deck. A rich Brāhmaṇa sails to Suvannabhūmi with merchandise and slaves and servants (dāsakammakarā) to multiply his wealth (IV. 15); Mittavindaka hires himself out as drudge in a vessel voyaging on deep sea (I. 239; II. 103). In the Milindapañho, a deck labourer in a sea-going vessel thinks in the vein "I am a wage-earner serving in this ship and get my food and wages hereby (bhatako aham, imāya nāvāya kamīnam karomi, imāyāham nāvāya vāhasā bhattavetanam labhāmi, p. 379)."

The hired man served in menial household work along with the slave in the house of rich merchants and land-owners (Jāt. III. 129). Besides these, were sundry job-seekers without any fixed employment who stood between vagrancy and starvation, who eked out a miserable existence by any chance engagement, whose services might

4. Domestic Labour  
and  
5. Miscellaneous.

be requisitioned for a month, fortnight, or even a day (Vr. XVI. 9) and who sometimes offered themselves for a particular work apparently with many masters at a time, e.g., the water-carriers (pāṇiyahārakā) who rear up a street dog (Jāt. II. 246), the water-carrier of the Gaṅgamāla Jātaka (bhatiko udakabhatim katvā) of whom we shall know more anon and Piṅguttara and his associates who clean the road for the king going to disport in the park (VI. 348).

The advent of the new labouring class after the slaves is obviously due to economic depression. The origin of slavery was in the right of the strong over the weak,—of hired labour in want and penury. It is only as late as in Pāṇini that we come across this parvenu (vetana, vaitanika, IV. 4. 12). The rules of the Arthaśāstra and of the Dharmaśāstras are an illuminating commentary on the scanty data of the Pali canon and they lead to the unmistakable inference (despite the contrary opinion held in certain authoritative quarters) that living was not easy for all, that want and plenty prevailed side by side and that although people held it degrading to work for hire, the number of persons reduced to such straits was by no means small. There must have been a wide prevalence of pauperism when want and starvation became a factor impelling people to sell themselves to slavery (bhaktadāsa, Manu, XVIII. 415). This same factor explains why in spite of the degradation of hired labour to a lower economic status, its ranks were swelled by perpetual supply from the landless and the destitute.

The wage-earner was commonly paid in money but he might be paid also in food or in both (Arth. II. 24; Vr. XVI. 13; Jāt. IV. 43). Other curious  
 Modes of payment  
 mediums of payment are also mentioned in the Jātakas. In the higher courses of learning the pupils



are admitted by teachers for an honorarium or for personal attendance and between the two discrimination is made in favour of the former :

dhammantevāsikā divā ācariyassa kammam katvā rattim sippam ugghanhanti, ācariyabhāgadāyakā gehe jettḥaputtā viya hutvā sippam eva ugghanhanti. II. 278.

Veda never told his pupils to perform any work or to obey implicitly his own behests ; " for having himself experienced much woe while abiding in the family of his preceptor, he liked not to treat them with severity."

dukkhābhijūo hi gurukulavāsasya śiṣyān parikleśena yojayitum neyesa. Mbh. I. 81.

A Brahmana youth serves a *caṇḍāla* as menial to acquire a charm (Jāt. IV. 200). A girl is taken to service for three years in a family for a scarlet robe (kusumbharattavattḥena bhatim karomi, V. 212), and a wife is "obtained after working for seven years in a house" (sattasamvaccarāni ghare katvā laddhabbhariyā, VI. 338). The worker in these cases receives a specified reward for which he has a fancy and accordingly lets his service unconditionally for a period demanded by the master.

Although the subjects of these illustrations must not be classed with ordinary hired labourers and although these illustrations fall outside the ordinary terms of service, they

point uniformly to a low valuation of labour. In the popular stories the workers' normal diet is coarse rice-gruel (kummāsa-pinḍa, Jāt. III. 406) and it never pretends to anything above the *yagubhatta*. In the Mahāummagga Jātaka, a potter's hireling after a full day's work with clay and the wheel, "sat all clay-besmeared on a bundle of straw eating balls of barley-goat dipt in a little soup."

Mattikam āharitvā cakkam vattetvā mattikamaḥkḥita-sarīram palālapithake nisīditvā mutthim mutthim katvā appasūpam yavabhattam bhuñjamānam, VI.—372.

Degradation and De-  
valuation of Labour

Sutana cannot make both ends meet and thinks, "I get a *masaka* or a half-*masaka* for my wages and can hardly support my mother," and he ventures to meet a *yakkha* and certain death for a thousand pieces with which his mother may be provided (III 326). A pathetic humour pervades the story of the water-carrier who saved a half-*māsaka* in the city rampart and was so transported by the thought of spending it on a festive day together with another half-*masaka* saved by his water-carrier wife<sup>1</sup> that he ecstatically ran singing league after league to fetch the treasure under scorching sun rays, "in yellow clothes with a palm-leaf fastened to his ear." The happy pair thus budgeted their savings of one *masaka* "we will buy a garland with one part of it, perfume with another, and strong drink with a third" (III 446).

The average daily income of the workman was, therefore, the smallest copper piece in currency which is far below the living wage. Such pittance of wage are corroborated in the *Arthasastra* which fixes a *pana* and a quarter per mensem<sup>2</sup> for agricultural labourers and field watchers with provisions proportionate to the amount of work done (II 24). They are not always entitled to a square meal and sometimes the diet actually varies according to labour. The sight of a begging monk coming with full alms bowl from his house inspires the thought in the *setthi* that if his *dasas* and *kammakaras* had got that food he could have more work out of them, and he sighs for the loss sustained (Jat III 300).

<sup>1</sup> Not strictly according to law, for the two had only cohabited (*kapaṇṭhiya saddhūṃ saṃvṛjīsam kappesi*). A casual word gives a vivid glimpse into the life and social status of these people.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., 20 *maṣakas* a month, or  $2/3$  *nāśaka* per day. Manu's rate is 1 *pana* or 16 *maṣakas* for the lowest menials, 6 *panas* or 96 *maṣakas* for the highest plus 1 *drona* of grain, i.e., 4 *āṇakas* or 512 *palas* (Com.) and clothing every 6 months (II 126). Thus the daily wages are  $1/2$  3 *maṣakas* with  $1/80$  *drona* of grain and clothing after 6 months.

Wages might be fixed or variable or they might be assessed at a fraction of the gain. In its regulations on textile labour, the *Arthaśāstra* lays down that wages are to vary according to the quality and quantity of the yarn produced; only artisans who can turn out a given amount of work in a given time may be engaged on fixed wages (II. 23). *Vṛhaspati* distinguishes between servants engaged on pay and servants engaged for a share of the gain (XVI. 8). But whatever the mode of payment, wages are uniformly of a low standard. The rates for share of profit are standardized by experts (*kuśālāḥ*) at 1/10 of crop for the cultivator, of butter for the herdsman and of sale proceeds for the pedlar (*Arth.* III. 13; *Yāj.* II. 194; *Nār.* VI. 2. 3). This astonishingly inequitable rule is somewhat liberalised by *Vṛhaspati* who entitles a cultivator's servant to 1/5 of the crop *plus* food and clothing or only 1/3 of the crop (XVI. 13).<sup>1</sup> How labour was estimated in proportion to capital is best illustrated in the regulation of the *Śāntiparva* fixing only 1/7 of produce for the cultivator who borrows the seed from others, the same share being fixed for traders with others' capital (60. 25f). To revert to *Nārada's* rule, "For tending 100 cows a heifer shall be given to the herdsman as wages every year, for tending 200 cows a milch cow shall be given to him annually and he shall be allowed to milk all the cows every eighth day" (VI. 10). In the *Śāntiparva* he is allowed the milk of 1 cow for tending 6 kine and 1 pair for keeping 100 (60. 25). And these rates are hardly more lucrative than the profit rate when the grave responsibilities

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the present rate prevailing in the districts of Western Bengal where the landless cultivator (*khet majur*) gets between 1/3 and 1/2 of produce and the sleeping landowner the rest. In Bihar and Orissa the *lamia* and *katraha* get 1½ srs of coarse grain for one day's labour and 8-10 *kuṭṭaha* of land with a little additional income in the harvesting season. Cf. also the more liberal rule of the *Arthaśāstra* on behalf of cultivators in crown-lands who obtain 1/4 or 1/5 of produce (II. 24).

of the herdsman tending his cattle in forest and robber-ridden forests are taken into account

A contract entered into before appointment between the employer and the employee on the wages and the terms of service is frequently dealt with by jurists and politicians

Free contract ?

This contract, freely agreed to between the parties so often propounded with zest, was no less a fiction than the freedom of contract insisted upon with cant by the anti-trade-unionists of the Victorian age and meant little less than terms dictated by the moneyed master to the destitute toiler with starvation staring in the face whose vocation required no technical skill and who had no organisation like the *śam* and the *gana* and no leader like the *jetthaka* or *pamūkha* to bargain for a higher pay and better working conditions. Labour legislation of the Dharmasūtras shows that public conscience was not alive to the fundamental inequity in distribution of wealth, because these protective laws were themselves derived from ancient tradition and current usage except for a thin humanitarian gloss which is less perceptible in popular literature reflecting actual conditions of society. The injunction that an "ill-considered and improper" agreement shall not be enforced is only a pious wish, and even if it was ever observed, the proper and standard rate was enough by itself to make the small wage earner chafe in life.

The field-watcher was liable to a fine or compensation for any loss. The watchman of the Śālikedārī Jātaka to whom were delivered by a Brahmana farmer 500 *karisas* of land for a wage, is afraid when the plot is ravaged by parrots, that "the Brahmana will have a price put on the rice and debit it from my account" (*śālim agghapetvā mayham mām karissatī*, IV, 276 ff.). Thus the hueling had responsibilities unlike the slave for any injury to his master's chattel or to the job

Terms of hire

undertaken. Any deficit out of the estimated output from the quantity of raw materials supplied must be made good from the wages—so goes the rule of the *Arthaśāstra* on textile labour (*sūtrahrāse vetanahrāsaḥ dravyasārāt*, II. 23). If fines are remitted in special cases considering accident, disease, etc., the loss incurred by the employer must be compounded by extra work (*ibid*). Payment may be withheld if circumstances change since the employment and if workmanship is below the employer's satisfaction (*deśa-kālātīpātanena karmanām anyathā karaṇe vā na sakāma kṛtamanumanīyeta*, III. 14; cf. *Yāj.* II. 195). For negligence of work a hired tiller or herdsman is to be flogged (*Āpast.* II. 11. 28. 2f). A workman who abandons his work before the expiry of the term shall forfeit his whole wages and pay a fine of 100 *paṇas* to the king (*Viṣ.* V. 153f). He is responsible for the "implements of the work and whatever else may have been entrusted to them for their business" (*Nār.* VI. 4). The herdsman is accountable for the damage done by cattle in others' fields (*Gaut.* XII. 20f; *Manu*, VIII. 240; *Viṣ.* XII. 20-26; *Yāj.* II. 162) and for loss of cattle through the depredation of thieves, robbers, wild beasts, reptiles, diseases and accidents unless he exerts himself timely to prevent the loss—a thing certainly not very easy to establish when the onus of proof remains on him (*Arth.* II. 29; *Āpast.* II. 11. 28. 6; *Manu*, VIII. 232; *Yāj.* II. 164; *Nār.* VI. 11-17).

The economic position and security of these unskilled hands who plied in big plantations or purveyed manual labour from door to door on a short term service was thus in many respects worse than that of the slaves. In the *Milinda* the *bhatikas* are put among the most degraded sort of work-people while the *dāsaputtas* stand in best company (p. 331). These latter were at least well-fed like domestic animals. In the *Jātaka* stories paid servants are not always admitted

Slave labour and  
Hired labour.

And it is because this caste did not crystallise into a community and because it was numerically smaller than the superior castes and smaller than the labour population of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, that it did not mature into an explosive material seething with perennial discontent under the superstructure of civilisation and material prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Times have since changed. They are now as scattered, ill organised, degraded and impoverished as before but their number has immensely multiplied. Together with the *under ryots* whose lots are not improved with the successive tenancy laws, they are rapidly growing into an organised menace to the existing social order.

## CHAPTER III

### DESPISED CASTES AND RACES

#### The *hinajātī*

I The *Caṇḍala* Origin Appearance Arts and professions corpse burner, executioner, hunter, magician Habitat Social segregation Social and economic disabilities General status

II The *Pukkusa* Origin Profession Status

III The *Nesada* Origin and identity Racial and professional stigma The hunting profession, *luḍḍaka kevaṭṭa* Methods equipments and accessories for hunting and fishing Habitat Social status

IV The *Veṇa* Ethnic professional castes Status Craft

V The *Rathakāra* Origin and degradation Craft chariot building, leather work Status

The *apasada* or mixed castes Inferior races

Side by side with the four *varṇas* constituted by Aryan invaders, the social physiognomy presents a host of despised castes and professions represented by the *The hinajātī* aboriginal races going under the general brand of *mlecchā* or *hinajātī*. Panini knows them as the class of *anvratasītas* below the *Sūdras* (2 4 10). The Pali literature picks up five of these pariah castes for constant mention. The *Suttavibhanga Pacittiya* enumerates them in contradistinction from the privileged estates of *Brahmana* and *Khattiya* *hinā nāma jāti caṇḍalajāti venajāti nesadajāti pukkusajāti eṣā hīnā nāma jāti* (II 2 1). These five appear associated in a conglomerate class of outcasts also in other passages (Mn 93, 96, 129, An II 85, Sn I 93, Pug. IV 19).

#### 1 The *Caṇḍala*

In Indian tradition the *candala* has always been the by-word for subjection and contempt. The earliest references are seen in the *Yajurveda Samhitās* and in the *Upanisads*. They show clearly

that the *caṇḍāla* was a degraded caste but yield no particulars.<sup>1</sup> Fick suggests that they were originally a tribal body.<sup>2</sup> After the first Aryan invasion the conquerors and the conquered were divided into two broad social categories,—*āryavarna* and *dāsatarṇa*. Gradually the *dāsatarṇa* or the defeated aborigines yielded to numerous sub-castes or classes in a social hierarchy taking positions according to their loyalty to the victors and to the adoption of the foreign culture. Those who remained outside the Aryan social scheme were reduced to a medley of pariahs and under-dogs. Among these outcasts some were ethnic groups, held together by a common race (*hīnajāti*) humiliated for their despicable callings. The *caṇḍāla* was at the bottom of the ladder. The Brāhmanical theory that he is the issue of a Sūdra husband and a Brāhmana wife reveals only a jealous attempt to preserve the purity of the stock against the growing menace of *pratiloma* marriage. If the children of these marriages did really sink down to the status of *caṇḍālas*, certainly that does not explain the origin of the caste and Fick's suggestion seems to be substantially correct.

That the *caṇḍālas* were aboriginal local tribes with their peculiar trades and professions and social customs crystallised later into a caste or community under the rigid isolation forced upon them by the Aryan or Aryanised society is gathered from the bulk of Pali evidences as well as Epic literature.

The Rāmāyana depicts the *caṇḍāla* in the following strain : “ with blue complexion, blue robes dishevelled locks, garlanded from the crematory, anointed with ashes from the same and adorned with iron ornaments.”

<sup>1</sup> Ch. Up. V. 107; 244; Āśv. Gr. S. iv. 1, Śamp. Gr. S. ii. 12; vi. 1, etc. Vāṛ. S. xxx. 21; Tait. Br. iii. 4. 17. 1; Br. Up. iv. I. 22.  
<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., 204 ff.



nīlavāstradhāro nīlaḥ paṇṣo dbvastamūrdhahajah  
cityamālyāmgarāgaśca āyasābharāṇo'bhavat (I. 58. 10f).

Manu also enjoins that the dresses of the *candāla* should consist of the garments of the dead and that black iron should be their ornament (X. 51).

In the *Mātanga Jātaka* he is described as "clad in a bad under-garment of red colour round which a belt is tied; above this a dirty upper garment, an earthen pot in hand"—*rattadupattam nivāsetvā kāyabandhanam bandhitvā pamsukulasamghātim pārupitvā mattikāpattam ādāya...* (IV. 379).

Manu also adds that he is "distinguished by marks at the king's command" (X. 55). *Medhātithi* understands these as external marks such as "axes, adzes and so forth used for executing criminals and carried on the shoulder." *Govindarāja* explains these as "sticks and so forth," *Nārāyaṇa* as "iron ornaments and peacock feathers and the like." But the more plausible is the explanation of *Rāghavānanda*, that they are to be branded on the forehead and on other parts of the body.

To the *candālas* were assigned certain despised professions befitting their rank which they had to pursue hereditarily. The *Arthaśāstra* fixes their habitat beside the crematorium (*pāṣanda-candālānām śmaśānānte vāsaḥ*, II. 4). *Manu* (X. 51) and *Viṣṇu* (XVI. 14) ordain that their clothes must be the mantles of the deceased. The occupation readily suggested by these injunctions is that of burning dead bodies. This was presumably not an independent profession but a compulsive service imposed on them by the state or society at large. *Manu* says: "In the daytime they may do the work assigned to them by order of the king; the corpse of anybody who has no relations they must carry out of the house—such is the standing rule" (X. 55). According to the commentary on the *Silavīmamsa Jātaka* a *candāla* is engaged in removing corpses (*chavachadḍaka-*

Arts and Profes-  
sions  
1. Corpse-burner

candala, III 195) He is certainly the corpse-burner (chavadahaka) who tops the list of despised professions in Milinda (p 331)

The cremation of unclaimed dead bodies and those of criminals seem to be an associate function of the equally disreputable job of an executioner. <sup>2</sup> Public Executioner. <sup>1</sup> Manu says "Criminals they shall kill according to the law, by order of the king, the clothes of the criminals, their beds or other ornamental articles they may keep to themselves" (X 56) Visnu says "A candala must live by executing criminals sentenced to death" (XVI 11) In the Anusasana-parva his duty is that of the public executioner (48 11) <sup>1</sup> In the Arthasastra it is laid down that a *candala* is to function for whipping a transgressing woman in the centre of the village (III 3) and for dragging an attempting suicide with a rope along the public road (IV 7) The idea of employing a *candala* for these purposes was to add an insult to the injury inflicted on the culprit

The *candala* is sometimes seen also in the despised rôle of a hunter. In the Śantiparva, Mahabharata he is an animal-trapper in a forest (138 23) and pursues his trade with a pack of dogs (138 114) In the Arthashastra occurs a parable which conveys that a *candala* usually profits by a fight between a dog and a pig (IX 2) Manu assigns only dogs and donkeys as their wealth (X 51) The profession of hunting is assigned to the caste known as *nisada* and the *candala* is not commonly seen in this rôle This may have been an occasional or an additional calling Or the term *candala* may have been

<sup>1</sup> Cf a Jataka sketch of the *coraghataka* attano cārittena phassaṇṇa kaṇṭhaka kassāṇa ādāya kāsayanivasino rattamaladharo II 41 179) The *carḍalas* customarily wear a garland of red flowers (Jāt III 30) Their dress and ornaments presumably were not uniform since, according to the Smṛtis they had them as they found them in corpses brought for cremation

used in a more generic sense covering all pariahs and outcasts among whom the *niṣāda* or animal-killer was one. - This is the more probable explanation as we come across other occupations of a *caṇḍāla* which do not fit in with a corpse-carrier or an executioner. One is found to earn living by selling fruits out of season but it should be remembered that he is a Bodhisatta (Jāt. IV. 200). Another is found mending old things (*jīṇṇapatisamkhāraṇaṃ karoti*, Jāt. V. 429). The phrase '*mūlavasyanavṛttinām*' used in Manu with reference to the occupation of a Sopāka *Caṇḍāla* is explained by Nārāyaṇa and Nandana as those who live by digging roots, i.e., in order to sell them as medicine. The *caṇḍāla* may appear with begging tray in hand (*kalopihattha*, An. IV. 375). In a Jātaka story a king is reduced to *caṇḍālahood* under the fury of his oppressed subjects (VI. 156). Evidently not the *caṇḍāla* caste but the general status of outcasts or degraded castes is meant.

The analysis of the phrase '*caṇḍāla-vamśa-dhohanam*' which occurs in the *Dighanikāya* (I. i. 13) and in the *Cittasambhūta Jātaka* is illuminating. Rhys Davids renders it as 'acrobatic feats by *caṇḍālas*.' Rouse as 'the art of sweeping in the *caṇḍāla* breed' and Fick as 'the art of blowing a *Caṇḍāla* flute.' The annotation of Buddhaghosa in the *Sumangalavilāsinī* clarifies the cryptic expression. He treats the phrase as a compound of three separate things. '*Caṇḍāla*' means '*ayoguḷa-kīḷā*,'—a trick with an iron ball, '*vamśa*' is '*venum ussāpetvā kīḷaṇaṃ*,' a trick with a bamboo pole (which is balanced on the juggler's forehead or throat while at the other end his pupil is poised. Com. Sn. 168), '*dhohanam*' is '*aṭṭhūdhovanam*.' Here the scholiast refers to a barbarian custom in a certain *janapada* where corpses were not burnt but buried and when decomposed, were dug out; the bones were washed and buried again with balms. The funeral rite was accompanied with drinking bouts and

4. Acrobat and juggler.

gusty wailings.—He quotes a passage from the *Anguttara-nikāya* (V. 216) where the custom called 'dhopanam' is said to be prevailing in Southern India and hilariously observed with feasting, dancing, singing and merry-making. He adds significantly 'Idha ekacce pana indajālena atthidhovanam dhopanan ti vadanti.'

Two things are apparent. Firstly, the custom certainly belongs to some aboriginal tribes particularly inhabiting Southern India and presumably to the *candālas*. Secondly, 'dhopanam' is a conjuring trick of bone-washing also presumably practised by *candālas*. The ball-trick and the pole-trick may be acrobatic feats or sleights of hand. What is gathered is that the *candālas* practised various sorts of magical and acrobatic feats peculiar to their breed (*candāla-kammam*). They displayed their art in public shows or on roadside which brought a few coppers from sight-seers.

The reference in the *Anguttaranikāya* to the custom prevailing in 'southern districts' weakens the comment of Fick that "the *candāla* village placed in the Citta-Sambhūta Jātaka in front of the gate of Ujjein and thus to the west of India, may have probably existed only in the imagination of the narrator who carried the narrow conditions of his home over the whole of India."<sup>1</sup> There is nothing to show conclusively that the *candāla* caste was peculiar to the social organisation in Magadha and Vāṅga because their modern descendants are mostly located there and because Magadha and Videha are referred to by Manu as the land of mixed castes.

The *candāla* had to remain in strict isolation from civilised contact and at the bottom of the uncivilised society. "But (unlike all other castes) the residences of the *candālas* should be outside the village"—so ordains Manu (X. 51). "Candālas must live out of the town.....In

this their condition is different (from and lower than that of the other mixed castes)"—so lays down Viṣṇu (XVI. 14). "Endued with a dreadful disposition, he must live in the outskirts of cities and towns" (Mbh. XIII. 48. 1). In the Jātakas the *caṇḍālas* are always seen living outside the city gate (bahinagare, IV. 376, 390; VI. 156) in villages and settlements entirely by themselves (mahācaṇḍālāgamako, IV. 200; caṇḍālāgāma, IV. 376, 390; caṇḍālavāṭakam, VI. 156). Fa-hien and Yuan Chwang corroborate the fact that they lived outside the city in their own villages. The latter adds that when they at all entered the municipal area, they had to travel along the left side of the road.

Elaborate rules of contact fortified the social partition. First and foremost, the rules of the table. The Brāhmaṇas of Kāsi who were thrown out of caste "having been made to taste the leavings of a Caṇḍāla" (caṇḍālucchiṭṭhabhatta) for their life, retired in shame to the kingdom of Mejjha (*mleccha*) and lived with the king of that country (Jāt. IV. 376 ff). In Buddha's own words food earned by unlawful means "is like the leavings of a Caṇḍāla";—the following Jātaka story narrates how a Brāhmaṇa takes the leavings of a *caṇḍāla* under pressure of hunger but later awakes to the disgrace done to his birth, clan and family, vomits out the food with blood and retires into the forest to die forlorn (II. 82 ff). The Smṛtis prohibit touching a *caṇḍāla* by higher castes for which purification by bathing is necessary (Āpas. II. i. 2. 8; Gaut. XIV. 30; Manu, V. 85; Vāś. XXIII. 33; Yāj. III. 30). Hence the wind and water that carry this contact is equally loathsome. Setaketu, the proud Brāhmaṇa pupil loathes the wind that brushes the body of a fellow *caṇḍāla* pupil (Jāt. III. 293). Another Brāhmaṇa in whose locks gets stuck a tooth-stick nibbled by a *caṇḍāla* and carried by river current, reviles and curses the culprit and compels him to move and live downstream

their birth and go to study at Taxila. Here again they are exposed by their dialect (*caṇḍalabbhāsā*) and driven out with blows for their audacity of intruding into the knowledge which was the preserve of the upper classes. The story also demonstrates how complete the isolation was—the isolation imposed by all the ingenuity that the priesthood was capable of—"that in the midst of a population speaking an Aryan dialect they preserved even in linguistic matters their racial individuality."<sup>1</sup>

Was there no mitigation for the *caṇḍāla*? It is admitted that Śāstra rules do not reflect truly the actual conditions of society. But in this respect at least the popular stories of the Jātakas show that reality did not go very far from priestly theory. The few Jātaka stories that afford casual relief should be taken with some discount for the subject therein is always a Bodhisatta. In one case he dares to kick a fellow Brāhmana pupil who is defeated in an academic dispute and the action is condoned by the teacher (III. 233). We have seen that the *caṇḍāla* was not at all admitted to the courses of learning. Elsewhere he is served by a Brāhmana for a charm and the Bodhisatta motive comes out in the open when the latter loses it from denying his *caṇḍāla* teacher out of shame. The fitting conclusion is the sermon by a king that a teacher is always to be respected be he a Sudda, Caṇḍāla or Pukkusa (IV. 200 ff). In another story a *caṇḍāla* who is maltreated by a merchant's daughter, lies down in fast for six days at the merchant's doors, obtains the girl for wife and compels her to carry him on her back to his village (IV. 376).<sup>2</sup> Every available testimony goes to show that the fellow would have been flayed or lynched no less than a Negro who would show the same temerity with a Yankee woman a few years ago.

<sup>1</sup> Pick: *Op cit*, p 205

<sup>2</sup> The apology is expressly given,—“For the resolve of such a man (Bodhisatta)—so it is said, always succeeds.”

In a discourse to the Brāhmaṇa Aggikabbhāradvāja Gotama cites the instance of Mātanga,<sup>1</sup> a *caṇḍāla* who reached the highest fame and went to the Brahmaloṇka while many high-bred Brāhmaṇas owing to their sinful deeds are blamed in this world and goes to hell after death. Hence not by birth is one a pariah or a Brāhmaṇa, by act one is a pariah or a Brāhmaṇa (Sut. V. 138. 142).

Na jaccā vasalo hoti  
Na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo  
Kammanā vasalo hoti  
Kammanā hoti brāhmaṇo

But why had he to fall back upon the next world to vouchsafe reward or punishment? The brutal level to which these people were kept precluded any question of their admittance to the centres of learning and enlightenment. The platitudes of the Suttas go down before the hard facts revealed in the Jātaka stories. Of physical tyranny and economic subjection of class by class, history has abundant instances. But it is doubtful whether to the segregation and soul-killing device innovated by the Ārya for a *caṇḍāla* there is any parallel.

## II. The Pukkusa

Nothing can be definitely said about the origin or the occupation of these people. Even their name is subjected to a wide range of variants. The Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad has Paulkasa, the Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā spells as Puklaka or Pulkaka (1. 6. 11), the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā as Paulkāsa (XXX. 17). The Arthaśāstra gives Pulkasa. In the Smṛtis they appear as Pukkasa while the Pali form is Pukkusa consistently. Like the *caṇḍāla* the *pukhāsa* of the Smṛtis is a mixed

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jataka, IV. 376ff.; Manu, IX. 14 48

caste, but opinions differ about his descent. The Arthaśāstra says that he is the issue of a *nisāda* on an *ugra* woman (III. 7), Manu (X. 18) and Bodhāyana (I. 8. 11), on a *Sūdra* woman. According to Viṣṇu (XVI. 5) and Vaiśiṣṭha (XVIII. 5) he is born of a Kṣatriya woman by a Vaiśya father, according to Gautama (IV. 19), by a *Sūdra* father.

Viṣṇu ordains that the *pukkasa* must live by hunting (XVI. 9). Manu assigns him "catching and killing of animals living in holes" along with two other mixed castes, viz., *ksattras* and *ugras* (X. 49). In the Pali literature he appears in an altogether different rôle. The commentary on the *Silavimamsa Jātaka* explains him as one living by removing flowers (*pupphachaddaka-pukkusa*, III. 195). The *pupphachaddaka* also appears in the *Mihinda* in a circle of despised castes and professions (p. 331). In the *Theragāthā* his occupation appears to be the removing of faded flowers from temples and palaces. Fick is thus led to state: "I don't believe that the Pukkusas were a special professional class but a race that lived generally by hunting and only occasionally by dirty work, like cleaning temples and palaces."<sup>1</sup> Dhammapāla's commentary, however, throws more light on his functions. Thera Sunīta born as a *pupphachaddaka*, earned his living as a street-sweeper, not making enough to kill his hunger. In early dawn he cleared the street of Rājagaha, collecting scraps, rubbish and so on into heaps, and filling therewith the baskets he carried on a yoke.

Whatever their origin and profession, one thing remains certain,—that they were a despised race whose lot was almost as bad as that of the *candāla*. In the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* *paukasa*

<sup>1</sup> Op cit., p. 206 On the *pukkusa* Rhys Davids says in the *Pali Dictionary*,—"name of a (non-Aryan) tribe, hence designation of a low social class, the members of which are said (in the *Jātakas*) to earn their living by means of refuse-clearing"



is the name of a despised race of men along with the *caṇḍāla* (IV. 3. 22). In *Manu* (XII. 55) and in the *Yājñavalkya* (III. 20) they are classed with *caṇḍālas* and various breeds of animals as creatures in whose wombs a *Brāhmaṇicide* is born. In the *Anuśāsanaparva* they are the progeny of the *caṇḍālas*, eat the flesh of asses, horses and elephants, and just like the *caṇḍālas* wear clothes procured by stripping human corpses and eat off broken earthenware (43. 24). In the *Jātakas* they are very commonly bracketted with the *caṇḍālas*. Like that of their bedfellows their sight was unseemly. Elder *Sunīta* plied his trade in early dawn obviously to escape sight. When *Buddha* was approaching with his train, finding no place to hide in on the road, he placed his yoke in a bend of the wall and stood as if stuck to the wall. He speaks of himself in the *Theragāthā*: "Of low family am I, I was poor and needy. Low was the work I did, namely that of removing faded flowers. I was despised by man, held in low esteem and reproved." <sup>1</sup>

Nīce kulamhi jāto 'ham daḷiddo appabhojano ;  
 hinam kammaṃ mamaṃ āsi, ahoṣiṃ pupphachaddako,  
 620.  
 jigucchito manussānaṃ paribhūto ca vambhito  
 nīcam maṇaṃ karitvāna vandissaṃ bahukam janam, 621.

### III. The *Nesūda*

According to the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Dharmaśāstras*, the *niśāda* is the offspring of a *Brāhmaṇa* on a *Sūdra* woman. Pīck groups him like the *caṇḍāla* and the *pukkusa* among the "ethnic castes" held together by a common race. The derivation of the word (*ni*—down, *sad*—settle) indicates those who have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Oldenberg : *Buddha*, p. 159.

settled down, i.e., the settled aboriginals.<sup>1</sup> As pointed out by Macdonell and Keith,<sup>2</sup> this view of Weber is supported by the fact that the ritual of the Viśvajit sacrifice requires a temporary residence with *niṣādas*, for the *niṣādas* who would permit an Aryan to reside temporarily amongst them, must have been partially amenable to Aryan influence. But the name appears in early Vedic literature also as a general term for the non-Aryan tribes outside the Aryan organisation like the *Sūdras*; for Aupamanyava (Yāska : Nirukta, III 8) took the five peoples (*pañca jñāh*) to be the four castes (*catvāra varṇāḥ*) and the *niṣādas* and the commentator Mahīdhara explains the word where it occurs in the Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā as meaning a *Bhilla* or *Bhil* (XVI. 27; cf. XXX. 8).

Apparently, the *niṣādas* like the *candalas* were originally a tribal group that lived mainly by hunting and fishing, the professions which represent the lowest stage of human culture. In India these bore the additional stigma of killing living beings.<sup>3</sup> This stigma and the consequent isolation retarded racial admixture and these people retained their tribal characteristic within the Aryan structure. In the Pali and Sanskrit literature we hear not only of villages and settlements but also of states, kings and armies of *niṣādas*. The legal definition of their origin however shows that the racial isolation gradually slackened under the stress of material circumstances. A Brāhmana youth adopts the occupation of a hunter when he cannot maintain himself by any other art and dwells in a border village or outside city gate (Jāt. II. 200; VI. 170). Among the ten callings of a straying Brāhmana appears the hunter's (IV. 361ff)

<sup>1</sup> Rhys Davids gives in Pali Dictionary 'one who lies in wait'

<sup>2</sup> Vedic Index

<sup>3</sup> *Dusitā sarvalokesu niṣēdatvaṃ gamiṣyati  
Pranātipatanirato nirannakrośalāṃ gataḥ,*

The profession followed by the entire branch of a low race took the shape of a caste when it was reinforced by infiltration from higher caste-orders.

It is not to be supposed that the profession of animal-killing was confined to a specific tribe or caste or that all those who took to it received the stamp of a specific caste-denomination called the *niṣāda*. *Hunter par excellence.* Manus assigns slaughter of wild animals to the mixed castes of Medas, Andhras, Cuñcus and Madgus, of cave-dwelling animals to Pukkusas, Kṣattris and Ugras while reserving killing of fish to Niṣādas (X. 48f). Elsewhere snaring animals is attributed as a supplementary occupation to the mixed caste of Sairandhra (X. 32). Megasthenes' fourth class of population consists of aboriginal herdsmen and hunters—"those who alone are allowed to kill animals," representing a professional class rather than a tribal or caste group. What may be inferred is that these professions were pursued more or less by all aboriginals although the *niṣāda* tribes were hunters *par excellence*, so much so that a professional hunter came to be called a *niṣāda* in popular parlance whatever his tribal origin.

The strictly professional name as distinguished from the racial is 'luḍḍaka' for hunter and 'kevaṭṭa' (Sans. *kaivarta*) for the fisherman or boatman. *Luddaka and Kevatta.* In the Pali works we come across the *vattakaluḍḍako* (Jāt. I. 208, 434; II. 113), the *godhaluḍḍako* (I. 488; III. 107), the *tittiraluḍḍako* (III. 64), the *migaluḍḍako* (II. 153; III. 49, 170, 185) according as the hunter or fowler specialised in stalking a particular beast or bird and purveyed its flesh. The *kaivarta* likewise seems to be a professional and not a tribal name. It does not appear in the Smṛti lists of mixed castes. According to the nomenclature of Manus the caste name corresponding to the fishing profession is *mārgava* or *dāsa* begotten by

a *niṣāda* on an *āyogava* woman (another mixed caste) and "subsisting by working as a boatman whom the inhabitants of Āryāvarta call a *kavarta*" (X. 34). The *niṣāda* king Guha is seen ready with his flotilla of 500 boats and hundreds of *kaivarta* soldiers in anticipation of Bharata's hostility to Rāma (Rām. II. 84. 8). Within the profession of *niṣāda*, fishing appears as a matter of course, as much as hunting (Mbh. I. 28; Jāt. VI. 71f.).

As these people excelled in bagging the different species of the four-footed, feathered and finny  
 Arts and Appliances races, their arts, appliances and accomplices differed accordingly. The quail-trapper nets quails by gathering the birds with the imitation of the note of a quail (Jāt. I. 208, 434; II. 113) and the partridge-catcher snares his preys by means of a decoy bird (III. 64).<sup>1</sup> The iguana-trapper goes to the forest to dig out iguanas with spades and dogs (*godhābīlam bhindanattāya kuddālam gabetvā sunakhehi saddhim araṇṇam pāvisi*, I. 488). The deer-stalker marks the whereabouts of deer from their foot-prints traced from the water-place, sets the toils (*migaluḍḍako vaddhamayam pāsam oḍḍetvā agamāsi*, II. 153) and bags his victim with sword and spear (*asiṇ ca sattiṇ ca*, III. 185). Bows and arrows instead of the snare and the sword or spear were also used (II. 200). For fishing purposes, nets were the commonest instruments while the line (*bālisiko balisena maccha uddharati*, Mil. 412; cf. Jāt. I. 482; Sn. II. 225f) and the wicker-cage (*kumināni*, Jāt. I. 427) set in pits and holes of rivers (*nadikandarādisu*, II. 238) were also in use. It is not always however that the *nesāda* specialised in killing a particular animal and very often all manners of birds, beasts and fishes came within his pursuit (II. 200; VI. 71f., 170).

<sup>1</sup> Just like his modern prototype The santhals, kols and other aboriginals still catch partridges and doves by the same artifice

The professional hunter of course sells his bag,—beast, bird or fish to the market place in the adjoining city. He may have a modest catch that can be carried on a pole (VI. 170) or there may be a windfall so that he drives a cart-load of venison (III. 49). The hunters probably disposed of their booty to the retailers who ran stalls of different varieties of flesh in the market place.<sup>1</sup> There were also people who did not dispose of their prize but lived upon them direct. "Certain men of the marches (of Benares) used to make a settlement wherever they could best find their food, dwelling in the forest, and killing for meat for themselves and their families the game which abounded there" (IV. 289). This is reminiscent of the accounts of Diodorus and Arrian on the wild nomadic tribes who lived on chase outside human dwellings. As the conquerors appropriated land of the superior grade, the more conservative of the original settlers withdrew to the marches where land offered little attraction to the tiller. Hunting, animal-keeping and free-booting became the occupation of these Bohemians. They were less amenable to Aryan culture and consequently accorded a more dishonourable status than their more settled compatriots.

It is not possible with available data to fix the geographical regions where the hunting and fishing folk were mainly located. Probably they were scattered all over the country, generally grouped in their own villages, situated outside the borders of cities as usual with other despised professions and castes, and generally fitted in a structure of communal economy. They are referred to as plying their nets jointly and as being obedient to one another's bidding (*anyonyavaśavarttinaḥ*, Mbh. XIII.

<sup>1</sup> *Gogḷātako*, *orobhiko*, *sūkariko*, *māghaviko*, *sākuntiko*, etc. are butchers in different varieties of flesh and not keepers or hunters of different animals.

50) Elder Yasoja was born at the gate of the city of Savatthi in a fishers' village, as the son of the headman of the 500 fishermen's families who fished together in the river Aciravatī (Therag 243ff) The anglers (balisika) in another village are in the habit of sharing their prize as it appears from a ruse planned by one of them who had a snag in his tackle and took it to be a big fish

puttakam matu santikam pesetva pativissakehi siddhim kalaham karapemi, evam ito na koci koṭṭhasam paccasim sissati (Jat I 482)

Elder Losaka Tissa was born in a fishing village of a thousand families (kulasahassavāse kevattagame) in Kosala of which the 1,000 heads went together to fish in river and pool (I 234) Elsewhere fishing *nisadas* are found to live in a remote region in the midst of the ocean (samudrakuksa vekante *nisadālayamuttamam*, Mbh I 26) The fishing tribes of the western countries brought tribute to Yudhisthira (II 32 10) In a Jataka story are found two villages of hunters near Benares on the two banks of a river each with a chief over its 500 families (VI 71f) A *nesadagama* near Benares is very common reference (II 36, IV 413, V 337, Therig Com 291ff) and such villages are seen as early as in the Latyayana Śrauta Sutra (VIII 2 8).

Von Schroeder suggests identification of *nisadas* with Nysaeans who, according to the Greek memoirs sent an embassy to Alexander when he was in the land of the Aśvakas<sup>1</sup> The identification however is doubtful Varahamihira recognises a kingdom (*rastra*) of the *nisadas* in the south east of the Madhyadesa (Br Sam XIV 10) Guha's principality was situated on the banks of the Ganges beyond Kośala with the city of Śrngavera (Ram II 50, 83 19)

<sup>1</sup> *Ind en Literatur und Cultur* p 206

The *nesāda* was despised both for his profession and for his birth. His was a despicable pursuit  
 Social position. (luddācāra khuddācārā'ti, Dn. XXVII. 25).

That animal-killing was stigmatised is evident throughout the Jātakas. It is among the ten pursuits of straying Brāhmaṇas. A king asks a hunter to give up his calling and adopt agriculture, trade and usury (IV. 422). A *setṭhi*'s son also dissuades a *luḍḍaka* from his profession (III. 51). It is given that these ill-behaved people (*dussīlānaṃ miga-luḍḍaka-macchabandhādīnaṃ*) receive but do not follow the law (III. 170). In the Mahābhārata a long tribute is paid by Sakra to the *niṣāda* king Nala who is well-versed in all duties, conducts himself always with rectitude, has studied the Vedas. . . , leads a life of *harmlessness unto all creatures*, is truth-telling and firm in his vows and in his house the gods are ever gratified by sacrifices held according to the ordinance. In that tiger among men—that king resembling a *lokapāla* in truth, forbearance, knowledge, asceticism, purity, self-control and perfect tranquility of soul. . . '2 and so on (III. 58. 8-11). According to the Brāhmanical rules, a Śūdra is not allowed to read the Vedas nor to perform sacrifices, not to speak of a *niṣāda*. The picture is unreal and the encomiums may not be taken to suggest that a *niṣāda* who gave up his trade was promoted from his order to higher ranks.

A more realistic account is that of the *niṣāda* king Guha who claims Rāma's friendship and is embraced by the latter. But neither Rāma nor Bharata accepted the food offered by him. Unlike the Vānara and the Rākṣasa allies, this *niṣāda* king does not figure in the sacrificial rites and public jubilations held after Rāma's return from exile to Ayodhyā. The *niṣāda* was a despised creature, both by birth and profession, and stood just above the *caṇḍāla* and the *pukkusa* in the scale of social gradation.

IV *The Vena*

Like the *nesada*, the *vena* and the *rathakara* were according to Rhys Davids "aboriginal Professional Castes tribes who were hereditary craftsmen in these crafts"<sup>1</sup> Fick describes them as "professional castes" or "non Aryan races who, although they stood on a higher culture level than the hunting and fishing races, engaged in branches of profession the practice of which presupposed no acquaintance with metals and their employment and were therefore held in low esteem by the Aryans who worked with iron instruments"<sup>2</sup> The Aryans advancing along the Gangetic plains gave the original settlers names after the material with which they worked Thus the 'bamboo worker' and the 'carriage-builder' became names of tribes or castes (*jati*)

The *vena*, literally, is one working with bamboo reeds In the Vedas, *venu* is mentioned as a reed of bamboo, but *vena*, *aina* or *renulara* are not seen<sup>3</sup> Apart from the Pali passages referred to above, the *vena* appears at the end of the Milinda list of crafts and professions along with the *chavadahaka*, *pupphachaddaka* and *nesada* In a Jātaka verse the *veni* is bracketed with the *candalā* (sic) as a term of rebuke (V 306) The *renuhara* or *veluhara* who goes into the forest with his knife to collect a bundle for his trade (Jat IV 251) is probably another name of the same "functional caste" who ranks in the conventional fashion along with the *candala*, *pukkusa* and *rathalāra* in the Lalita Vistara as *hīnalūla* in which a Bodhisatta is not reborn (Ch III)

The tribal craft of these people was working with reeds, i.e., basket making and flute making Dhammapala

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogues of the Buddha* Vol I, p 100

<sup>2</sup> *Op cit*, p 116

<sup>3</sup> In the *Arthashastra* the *aina* is the name of an Ambastha on a *Vaidela* woman (III 7)



explains them as a caste working on willows and reeds (venim vā ti venajātikā vilivakāra-naṣakārā, PvA, p. 175). The Jātaka commentary on *venī* (V. 306) explains it by *tacchikā*,—a carpenter's widow.<sup>1</sup> Probably the original bamboo-working race was not always rigidly identified with its profession. Manu defines the function of the *vena* as playing drums (X. 49) while the craft of making baskets and other things with cleft bamboos is ascribed to the *pāṇḍusaupaka* caste originating from the *caṇḍāla* (Mbh. XIII. 48. 26; cf. Manu, X. 37).

### V. The Rathakāra

The *rathakāra* or chariot-maker is in the Atharvaveda one of those subject to the king (III. 5. 6) apparently standing as an example of the industrial population. It appears definitely as a caste-name in the Yajurveda Samhitās (Kath. XVII. 13; Mait. II. p. 5; Vaj. XVI. 17, XXX. 6) and in the Brāhmanas (Tait. I. 1. 4. 8; III. 4. 2. 1; Sat. XIII. 4. 2. 17). In the Yājñavalkya he is the progeny of a *māhīśya* (Kṣatriya father+Vaiśya mother) and a *karaṇī* (Vaiśya father+Sūdra mother). In later literature he is a caste below the Vaiśya but superior to the Sūdra.<sup>2</sup> He is a functional caste like the *taḥṣaka* and the *dhaivara*, the carpenter and the fisherman respectively in the Vedic literature, held as inferior to the *ārya* orders. His further deterioration in social esteem is exhibited much later in the Pali texts quoted above. In the Khandahāla Jātaka he figures in a low series with the *pukkusa* and the *vesa* (VI. 142).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thus one despised caste is explained by means of another. In the Vedic literature the *taḥṣaka* or joiner appears in a low role.

<sup>2</sup> Weber *Indische Studien*, 10, 12, 13 Hillebrandt suggests that the Anu tribe formed the basis of this caste, referring to their worship of the Rbhus who are chariot makers *par excellence* *Vedische Mythologie*, 3, 152 f.

<sup>3</sup> In the Arthashastra, the *rathakāra*'s is a profession prescribed for the mixed caste of Vaiśya (III. 7), but in the previous chapter, it is a caste name.

This *rathakāra* whose very appellation indicates the function of chariot-building, became associated in course of time with a new craft, that of working on leather. Probably this transformation from a comparatively less to a more disrespectable pursuit took place in the Gangetic regions and probably this also explains the consequent deterioration in social status of the caste as seen in Pali literature. In the Majjhima the artisan who is shaping an axle of a chariot (*rathassa nemim*) is not a *rathakāra* but a *yānakāra* (I. 5). In the Jātaka verses the metaphor occurs twice,—“just as the *rathakāra* cuts the shoe according to the skin” (*rathakāro va cammassa parikantam upāhanam*, IV. 172; *rathakāro va parikantam upāhanam*, VI. 51). In the first, the commentary explains *rathakāra* as *cammakāra*. The commentary on the Petavatthu also explains *rathakārin* as *cammakārin* (III. 1. 13). But certainly there was no complete overlapping of the two crafts in the same caste, for the *cammakāra* and the *rathakāra* are both mentioned side by side in the Milinda list referred to above.<sup>1</sup>

That the two were not identified is also proved by the enumeration of the *cammakārasippam* among the set of despised callings cited in contradistinction from the despised castes. The occupation of a cobbler was held disreputable in all quarters. Manu assigns working in leather to the mixed castes of *kārāvara* and *dhigvana* (X. 36. 49): this *kārāvara* again, is said to be begotten by a *cammakāra* on a *niṣāda* woman (Mbh. XIII. 48. 26).<sup>2</sup> Food offered by the shoe-maker is not to be taken by a Brāhmaṇa (Mbh. XII. 37. 31). Even trading

<sup>1</sup> Cowell and Rouse find a puzzle in this dual function of the *Rathakāra* and take refuge in the suggestion that he might be the worker of wooden shoes.

<sup>2</sup> According to Manu however, by a *niṣāda* man on a *raideha* woman

in iron and leather is censurable (vikrayam lohacarmanah, XII. 295. 5 f).

The leather-worker's was a developed art. He did not make shoes only. He prepared leather-  
 Workmanship. sack holding a hogshead's weight (kumbha-kara-gāhikaṃ cammabhastam),<sup>1</sup> leather ropes and straps, shoes "big enough for an elephant," and leather parachute (cammachatta) by means of which a hunter flies down a mountain (Jāt. V. 45 f). He worked shields of 100 layers, of superb workmanship (phalasatam<sup>2</sup> cammam hontimantī-sunitṭhitam, VI. 451). He is among the eighteen *senis* of artisans who build a king's dwellings in Uttarapañcāla (VI. 427).

The conventional Pali list does not certainly exhaust the  
 Inferior races. medley of castes and tribes who either because of their race or for low occupations remained outside the pale of the Aryan culture. Under the general brand of *mleccha* passed the procession of indigenous and foreign barbarians in the Epics,—the Pahlavas, Śakas, Yāvanas, Kāmbojas, Kirātas, Cīnas, Hunas and so forth. Sinful races who act like *caṇḍālas*, ravens and vultures are Andhakas, Gubas, Pulindas, Śavaras, Cucukas and Madrakas in the South and Yaunas, Kāmbojas, Gandhāras and Kirātas in the North (Mbh. XII. 207. 42 ff). The Yonas, Kāmbojas and Gandhāras settled in the North-West Frontier Province. Among the Yona, the Brāhmana and Śramaṇa had no foothold in Aśoka's time (R.E., V.). Among them and the Kāmbojas, it is said in the Majjhima, there were only two castes, *ārya* and *dāsa* (d'eva vannā ayyo c'eva dāso ca) and where a *dāsa* can be an *ārya* and an *ārya* a *dāsa* (93).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the *cammamaluka* or the leather sack used to carry earth dug out of a tunnel (Jāt VI. 432)

<sup>2</sup> Phalasatappamānaṃ bahukhāre khadāpetva modubbhavaṃ upanīscammaṃ,—  
 Com

The Andhras occupied the land beyond the Godavari,—the southern part of the Central Provinces and Nizam's dominions. The Pulindas, though scattered over many provinces appear mainly in the north and north-east of the Andhras (R. E. XIII).<sup>1</sup> The Ābhīras who earned notoriety as a tribe of robbers (Rām. VI. 22. 30 f) infested the western coast south of Guzrat.

In the Arthaśāstra, the *mlecchas* figure as savage, barbarian tribes inhabiting the frontiers (VII. 10, 14; XII. 4). They are associated with criminals (XIII. 5) and the sardonic author finds in them a good recruiting ground for spies and agents provocateurs (I. 12, XIV. 1).

To Megasthenes some of these tribes were reported as pigmies waging war with cranes and partridges; to the author of the Periplus they are savage and cannibal races—the Cirrhadoe the Bargysi, the Horse-faces and Long-faces who inhabited the North or the Himalayan valleys.

Apart from these the Smṛtis enumerate as many as fifteen mixed castes (*apasada*) ascribing some particular infamous occupation to each of them. The elaborate regulations on these mixed castes and their unmitigated denunciation would not have been necessary unless there was a real menace to the purity of the Aryan stock from connubial relations with non-Aryan tribes. Racial admixture was laid under the strictest interdiction and the progeny of the violation of Aryan blood, relegated to all sorts of impure crafts and callings, were debased into the lowest stratum of social conformation.

Mixed castes

<sup>1</sup> D. R. Bhandarkar - *Asoka*.

## CHAPTER IV

### DESPISED CRAFTS AND CALLINGS

The *nīnasippa* (1) Basket maker (2) Cobbler (3) Potter (4) Weaver (5) Barber (6) Acrobat (7) Snake-charmer (8) Snake doctor (9) Physician (10) Miscellaneous (11) Vagrancy.

The Suttavibhanga Pācittiya enumerates the five low occupations as distinct from the five low castes.

Hīnam nāma sippam nalakārasippam kumbhakārasippam pesakārasippam cammakārasippam nahāpitasippam tesu tesu va pana janapadesu oññātam avaññātam hīlitam paribhūtam acittikatam, etam hīnam nāma sippam. II. 2. 1.

It would seem that for those who made their living by these trades there was no hard and fast line determined by birth. But on the other hand the tendency is very clear for the son to follow the father's craft. The association thus begun and the stigma laid on these crafts resulted in the course of centuries into complete identification of the craft with birth and the crystallisation of thorough-going and hide-bound castes on the basis of particular professions.

#### 1. The Basket-maker and 2. The Leather-worker

That caste and profession were fast converging and assuming a common border-line is clearly understood from the enumeration of the *nalakāra* and the *cammakāra* among the crafts after the *vena* and *rathakāra* are cited to illustrate caste groups. We have seen the annotator explain *vena* as *nalakāra* (PvA.p. 175). The *nalakāra* works with *venu*

or reeds.<sup>1</sup> So the *rathakāra* and the *cammakāra* are used indiscriminately to denote the leather-worker.

### 3. The Potter

The Potter made earthen pots with clay and the wheel just as in the present day in the villages of India (Jāt. III. 368; Sn. II. 83; Mbh. XI. 3. 11 ff). He made vases with various artistic designs painted on them (Jāt. V. 291). The son generally followed the father's trade (II. 79; III. 376); but the mention of the *antevāsi* and the *ācariyo* in connection with this and similar petty professions implies that these were not necessarily hereditary (Jāt. V. 290 f; Dn. II. 88). The apprentice after learning the art from the master would certainly set up an establishment of his own or succeed to his master's.

The *kumbhakāra* is sometimes seen settled in villages outside city-gates (Jāt. III. 376, 508). But he does not generally appear in very dark colours. The potter *Ghaṭikāra* is a bosom friend (*piyasahāyo*) to the Brāhmaṇa *Jotipāla*, so much so that the two go to bathe together and the former even pulls the latter by the locks as an appeal to go to see *Kassapa* (Mn. 81).

### 4. The Weaver

The weaver was the *pesakāra* or the *tantavāya* both of which were synonymous (Com. Vin. III. 259). Some sort of corporate life or guild organisation seems to have developed among this profession. We hear of "weavers' quarter" (*tantavitatatṭhānam*) in a *nigamaḡāma* (Jāt. I. 356) and of

<sup>1</sup> *Pitaputtā naḷakāra... gangatīre velorup upadharenta*, Jāt. IV, 318; *naḷakara-jetṭhaka .. puttēna sabbhin gantva ten veṇugumban chinditun ārabhi*, DhA.I. 177. Cf. Prince Kusa who enlists himself as an apprentice to a *naḷakāra* serving a royal house, makes a palm-leaf fan (*tālavantap*) with paintings upon it; Jāt. V. 291 f; basket-makers weaving a mat—*naḷakara kilanjan* cinnanti, II 301.

"weavers' street" (*pesakāravīthi*) outside a city (*DhpA. I. 424*). Four weavers in Benares would divide the proceeds of their trade into five shares, taking one each and giving away the fifth in common on charity (*Jāt. IV. 475*). In the *Petavatthu Atthakathā* eleven *pesakāras* with a *jeṭṭha-pesakāra* entertain a *bhikkhu* to cordial hospitality (pp. 42ff.).

The *pesakāra* is loosely defined as a craft and as a *vaṇṇa* (*DhpA. I. 428*). He is presented with the *kappaka*, the *naḷakāra* and the *kumbhakāra* in a list of ordinary craftsmen (*puṭhusippāyatanāni*) who maintain themselves and their parents and children and friends in happiness and comfort (*Dn. II. 14*). But his trade was not a lucrative one apparently because of the degradation of his race and craft (*lāmakakamma, Jāt. I. 356*). A weaver (*tantavāya*) dwelling outside city (*bahinagare*) who was spreading the threads (*tantam pasāreti*) while her daughter moved the shuttle (*tasaran vaḍḍheti*) even when he was caught with senile decay was considered the poorest man in the city by *Mahākassapa* (*ime mahallakakāle pi kammaṃ karonti, imasmin nagare imehi duggatatarā natthi manne, DhpA. I. p. 424*). A *sāmaṇera* (novice monk) who is in love with a weaver's daughter is thus questioned by her parents: "*tvam amhe uccākulā ti sallakkhesi. Mayan pesakārā, sakkhissasi pesakārakamman kātun ti?*" The love-lorn monk gallantly retorts: "*gihibhūto nāma pesakārakamman vā kāreyya, naḷakārakamman vā, kin iminā?*" ; and he obtains the girl and adopts the weaver's trade (*VbhA. 294 f*).

### 5. The Barber

The barber (*nahāpita, kappaka*) used to do shaving, hair-dressing, cross-plaiting, shampooing, etc. (*massukaraṇa-kesauṭṭhāpana-aṭṭhapadaṭṭhapanādīni sabba kiccāni karoti, Jāt. II. 5*). His was a definitely dishonourable status. A court-valuer sneaks at a king's miserly offer to his prognoses as a barber's gift (*nahāpitādayo*) and resigns (*Jāt. IV. 137*).

A barber after becoming a *paccekabuddha* addresses the king, his late master by his family name and the crowd is infuriated at such audacity on the part of a low-caste person whose occupation is clearing of dirt (hīnājacco malamajjano nahāpītaputto, III. 453; II. 452). A barber asks his son to give up his ambition for a Licchavi princess as *hīnājacca*. The contrast set forth at the introduction of a story which recounts a similar fancy of a jackal for a lioness significantly reveals the depraved status of a barber; he is the same to a royal family as the jackal to a lion (II. 5).<sup>1</sup>

Was the barber's a more respectable calling in farther west from the Gangetic plains? In the *Mihinda* list of crafts and professions he stands in company with cooks, smiths, florists, bathers, etc.<sup>2</sup> This profession is not stigmatised in the law-books or in relevant passages of the Epics. A *Snātaka* is allowed food offered by a barber (Manu, IV. 253) but not by other artisans (214-20). Even to-day his position is not very dishonourable and he performs important functions in the family ceremonies of the upper orders.

### 6. *The Acrobat, Magician and Dancer*

Acrobats, dancers and jugglers (*nata-nartaka*) form a class by themselves. Very often these arts were combined in the same persons. They entertained citizens in the *samājas* or festive amusements (Rām. I. 18. 18 f; II. 6. 14; 67. 9 ff) or roamed about exhibiting their skill (*sippam dassento vicarati*, Jāt. I. 430; *māyam vidhamseyya*, Sn. III. 141) on the highroad.

Interesting specimens of this art are given. A man born in a jumper's family (*lamghana naṭaka yoniyam pati-sandhim gahetvā*) lived with his pupil on the display of his

<sup>1</sup> The royal barber is occasionally seen in friendly intercourse with the employer (Jāt. I. 137; Vin. VII. 14).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dn. II. 14.



feat (*lamghanasippam*) which consisted in setting up a number of javelins in a row and dance through them (*ibid.*). Elsewhere two magician *naṭas* show their tricks. One of them conjures up a mango tree, climbs it and gets himself chopped to pieces by the slaves of Vessavana. His accomplices join the pieces together, pour water and bring him back to life. The other walks into fire with his troupe and comes out unscathed when the fire is burnt out (*Jāt.* IV. 324). Another conjurer swallows a sword 33 *angulas* long and of sharp edge, before a gathering (*III.* 338). The *Arthaśāstra* explains several magical tricks like fire-walking, fire in water, breaking of chains, acquirement of invisibility, etc., many of these in a sham manner (*XIV.* 2, 3).

These trades served as a wide channel for the wasting of the rich man's money. In the *Sigālovada Sutta* (*Dn.*) the six dangers at a *samajjā* are dancing, singing, music, recitations, conjuring tricks and acrobatic shows (*cf.* *Dn.* I. i. 13). A prodigal son squanders paternal wealth of 40 crores on drinking, gluttony and debauchery and on jumpers, runners, singers and dancers (*lamghanadhāvanagītanaccādīni*, *Jāt.* II. 431). But it does not seem that this money went to the pocket of the struggling man who was half an artist and half a tramp and who is uniformly portrayed as a wretched and despicable creature. The poor jumper who kills himself in trying to clear five spears instead of four which was within his practice (*Jāt.* I. 430), the dancer who drinks himself to death with all the earnings by his performance in a fête (*III.* 507), the impoverished family of acrobats (*naṭakakula*) reduced to begging (*II.* 167) are typical representatives of a class living a marginal existence. Presumably the rich gamblers betted in shows run by a parasitic set of people with professional jumpers and sprinters.

In the *Milinda* list of crafts, the *nataka*, *naccaka*, *lamghaka*, *indajālaka*, and *malla* come in a series on the wake of the *māṃsiha* and the *majjika*,—the butcher and the brewer.

cure snake-bites where Greek physicians fail (15), it is not impossible that his authority was merely echoing the Indians' vaunting.

### 9. *The Physician*

The medical profession ranged from wide pharmacological knowledge to quackery and sorcery. Megasthenes observes both the sides of the picture. He speaks of physicians whose most esteemed remedies were ointments and plasters and who "effect cures rather by regulating diet than by the use of medicines." At the same time he notices "diviners and sorcerers.....who go about begging both in villages and towns" (Str. XV. i. 60).

The renowned Ayurvedic school at Taxila is a tribute to the development of medical knowledge. Jīvaka, the celebrated house-physician to the Magadhan king Bimbisāra, received his education there (Mv. VIII. 6). The ancient teachers of medicology (tikicchakānam pubbakā ācariyā) are thus named : Nārada, Dhammantāri (physician of the gods—specialist in snake-bite), Angīrasa (versed in the charm of Atharvaveda against disease), Kapila, Kandaraggisāma, Atula and Pubba Kaccāyana (Mil., p. 272). The parable of an expert physician and surgeon (kusalo bhisakko sallakatto) who operates upon and treats a septic wound caused by weapon (Mil., pp. 110 ff ; Mv. VI. 1 ff) or a boil (Mil., pp. 149, 353) or who can cure a leper in advanced stage or "give the blind man his eyes" (Mn. 75) exhibits an advanced knowledge of pharmacopœia. But as in all ancient culture groups, medical lore was vitiated with demonology and exorcism (bhūtavijjā, Dn. I. i. 21 ; bhūtavejjam, Jāt. III. 511). In the introductory story of a Jātaka tale, even in the portion which is supposed to be later composition, a boy is advised to escape from a disease-infected house by digging a hole in the wall as the spirit of disease was supposed to guard the gate but not other parts of the house

(II. 79). Belief in spirits was not the only limitation to the science. The Vijayasutta of the Suttanipāṭa exhibits some elementary knowledge of anatomy and ends by denouncing love for an impure thing like the human body (*cf.* An. V 110). Here is perhaps a psychological factor which conduced to the relegation of pathology and surgery to the plebeian sciences.

The art of healing was stigmatised (Mbh. V. 33. 4; XIII. 135. 14). Not only is a Brāhmana prohibited from dealing in medicinal herbs (Manu, X. 86-89; Gaut. VII. 9 ff; Āpas. I. 20. 12), he is not to take the food offered by the physician (Manu, IV. 211 ff; Āpas. I. 6. 19. 15; Mbh. XII. 37. 29 ff). Indra opposes the offering of Soma juice to the twin Aświns, for their profession had degraded them to the position of servants (Mbh. III. 124. 12). Manu assigns medical practice to the mixed caste of Ambaṣṭhas (X. 47).

But however stigmatised, for a good practitioner it was not a poor profession, because people do spend for the impure filth of their body. By curing a patient Jīvaka gets 16,000 *kahāpaṇas* and a servant and a maid-servant (Mv. VIII. 13). For curing the chief *setṭhi* of Rājagaha, he charges a fee of 100,000 (*ib.* 20). Nor was his status a degraded one. Suśena the state-physician of the *vānaras* of Kiṣkindhyā (Rām. VI. 101. 43) enjoyed presumably a quite respectable status. There appears to be an air of unreality in the unqualified damnation of the medical practice in the literature of the western districts; in the Gangetic provinces at least, the profession as such probably did not suffer under any stigma. The position of the practitioner depended on his practice as now and ever.

#### Miscellaneous

The list given above is not exhaustive. In the Sānti-parva appearance in theatres (*rangāvatarāṇa*), disguising one-

self in divers forms (rūpopajīvanam), sale of liquor and meat (madyamāmsopajīvyāñca) are among censured professions (295. 5f). A washerman, one who lives on the income of dancing girls (raṅgastrījīvinām), professional panegyrists and gamblers (vandidyūtavidāṃ) and singers and jesters (hāsaka) are among those whose food is forbidden to a Brāhmana (37. 29ff). A Brāhmana is prohibited from selling salt, cooked food, curds, milk, honey, oil, clarified butter, sesame, meat, fruit, roots, pot-herbs, dyed cloths, perfumery and treacle (Mbh. V. 38. 5). To live by purveying lac, honey,<sup>1</sup> meat,<sup>1</sup> and poison is a curse (Rām. II. 75. 38). The Smrtis also give butchers, meat-sellers, killers and trappers of divers animals, trainers of animals, makers of, and dealers in weapons, smiths, carpenters, weavers, dyers, oil-pressers, ploughmen, artisans, mechanics, architects, superintendents of workers in mines and factories, engineers, washermen, quacks, tailors, shopkeepers, publicans, police-officers, mace-bearers, astrologers, soothsayers, weather prophets, etc., (Manu III. 150.63; IV. 84, 210-20; VIII. 65 f; XI. 64; XII. 45 f; Āpas. I. 6. 14; Gaut. XVII. 17; Vās. III. 3, XIV. 2 f; Baudh. I. 5. 10. 24, II. 1. 2. 13; Nār. I. 178, 181, 183-85; Vṛ. XXII. 3; Viṣ. XXXVII. 22f, 32, LI. 8, 10, 13-15; LXXXII. 7, 9). The stigma to some of these was only relative to the so-called religious caste while to others, i.e., where the subject is disqualified as witness, it pointed to an absolute standard by which the economic functions of society would be regulated.

The professions assigned in the law books to the so-called mixed castes were *ipse jure* infamous. Guardianship of the harem is the appropriate function of the Vaidehaka (Com. Manu, X. 47; Mbh. XIII. 48. 10)<sup>2</sup>, management of horses and chariots (Manu, X. 47; Viṣ. XVI. 13), or

<sup>1</sup> Trade in honey and meat is censured also in Manu, III. 151 and in Jat IV. 361.

<sup>2</sup> According to Viṣṇu "keeping (dancing girls and other public) women and profiting by what they earn" (XVI 12).

singing encomiums (Mbh. XIII. 48. 10) of the Sūta. The Āyogava is a carpenter (*ib.* 13) or net-maker (*ib.* 20). The Maireyaka manufactures wine and spirits (*ib.* 20).

Evidently no rigid and uniform classification prevailed. The Vinaya passage quoted at the beginning of the chapter indicates that besides the damned five there were other pursuits despised in other countries. Standards varied in countries and among communities. Jealousies and predilections played their part in mutual estimation of races. What was honourable at some place might be dishonourable at another. The whole of half-Aryanised Magadha was low in the eyes of the dwellers in the land of Manu, of the high-browed and sneakish *śūdrīka-brāhmaṇa* keenly sensitive of his pedigree. The Sākya and the Koliya regarded each other as barbarous people pursuing customs opposed to their own sense of decency (Jāt. V. 412). There was, further, a host of artisan classes who filled a wide range of middle position in economic condition and social esteem,—always however gravitating towards the bottom,—the smith, the carpenter, the garland-maker, the musician, the actor, the panegyrist, the buffoon, the drummer, the butcher, the brewer, the brothel-keeper and so on.

### *Vagrancy*

Below the great estates of wealth and honour, outside the labouring classes, the despised castes and the despised callings,—the vagrant or the professional beggar completes the social picture. There was no flooded mass of starving unemployed; and to many, beggary was a profitable business. Alms-giving being an acid test of piety, kings and merchants erected big charity-halls in the city wherefrom alms were distributed to thousands of people every day (Jāt. III. 129, 300, 414; IV. 15, 63, 176, 402; V. 383; VI. 97; Dn. XVII. i. 23). Professional beggars multiplied fruitfully under the shelter of indiscriminate charity and we hear

of beggar families (duggatakula, Jāt. I. 238) as much as of an acrobat family or a wage-earning family. But the real problem of poverty was not solved, as it never can be, by private altruism. There were people with whom begging was the last trench in the battle for existence. With the disruption of the primitive agricultural and pastoral economy, with the growth of cities and aggravation of famines, in days when men sold their freedom for food, there were many who remained outside the reach of the benevolent and wealthy. The Jātaka verse refers to "those who begged for need" (VI. 502)<sup>1</sup> and it is not an unexpected fate for a disinherited Brāhmaṇa boy, reduced to destitution and beggary, to die helpless on the street (V. 468; cf. Therīg. 122 ff).

<sup>1</sup> The commentary goes: *vanibbalaṇaṇesu kaṇṇi ekam pi yācakaṃ mā vihiṭṭha-*  
*yuttha*.

## CHAPTER V

### CLASS BASIS OF SOCIAL ECONOMY

The real India Subjective character of canonical and court literature Material for peoples' history Comparative objectivity of popular literature

Popular religion Aboriginal fetishism Aryan elemental gods Symbolical gods Growth of sects and rituals Priesthood Rise to wealth and power Official and private bounties Corruption Regular and secular clergy

Kings and military lords Merchants Economic background of Buddhist heresy.

Slaves and wage-earners Economic determinism in social gradation The parish—his position vis à vis the Saṃgha Social contrast.

Class compromise Immaturity of class consciousness Lower middle class the centre of gravity Exploited elements a composite body. Ignorance and subjection of the Śūdra

As the broad economic motives behind social and cultural growth are unfolded before our eyes, we bid fare to the India of magic and romance, the India resounding with Vedic hymns, Buddhist sermons and Epic saga. The miracles wrought by the prophet, the carnivorous and the graminivorous living in fraternal embrace, the king forsaking *rāṣṭravijaya* for *dhammavijaya*, the *setthi* spurning his hoard like chaff and taking to *pabbajjā*,—all melt in the horizon and we feel the hard ground of conflicts and struggles under our feet. We explore the economic content of India's great spiritual culture—production and distribution of wealth, formation of classes thereon with interests essentially hostile beneath the external harmony of a priestly social philosophy.

To ascertain whether *artha* or *paramārtha* was the motive power of the cultural apparatus, it is necessary, first of all, to examine the nature of India's historical material. India produced no Thucydides or Tacitus. It yielded a plentiful

Subjectivity of canonical and court literature

crop of canonists and theoreticians to prescribe the divine law and write sacred texts. They formulated their social doctrines in tune with the Brāhmanist scheme of society. Their sacred institutes and canonical literature represent only the Brāhmanist scheme of society and not society itself. It has been long proved by Western scholars like Senart,<sup>1</sup> Fick and others that Indian society was never founded on the fourfold functional caste—the *varṇāśrama*—as punctiliously laid down in the Smṛti and didactic literature. Brāhmaṇas are frequently seen to drive the plough, feeding themselves on pork, fowl and beef, living on usury or fighting even better than the so-called Kṣatriyas. The householder, instead of repairing to the forest at the age of fifty, is more often seen to cultivate the two middle *vargas*, — *artha* and *kāma*. A society which observes the priestly injunction that women are gates of hell cannot produce women like Ubhayabbārati and Maitreyī. The king who is sobriqueted Ṣaḍbhāgin—as the taker of only 1/6 of agricultural produce as taxes—is frequently seen ruining the cultivators with fleecing demands and no less is the same king who is extolled as a veritable god on earth seen to die or leave his kingdom before the fury of his oppressed folk.

These social pictures are not found in the Brāhmanical sacred books. In fact India's history is not to be traced in these canonical works nor in the panegyrics of *praśastikāras* maintained by kings to blow their trumpet. Even foreign visitors like Megasthenes, Fabien and Yuan Chwang wrote under the influence of these religious motives or of king's court. The pulsating life of the endless mass of humanity that extended between the king's palace and the ascetic's *āśrama* is not felt in court or divine literature. The material for peoples' life is to be sought in peoples' literature. Fortu-

Sources for peoples' history.

<sup>1</sup> *Les Castes dans l'Inde*



nately such popular literature is not so wanting for us as genealogical and chronological tables and diplomatic and military records. Of course even this literature could not completely escape the tamperings of compilers with idealistic motives

The remarkable difference between the canonical literature of Brāhmanas and that of Buddhists is that the former's vehicle was a savant's language, the latter's vehicle was a more widely spoken language. Buddhist philosophy and practice exhibit some advance from Brāhmanism towards equality and democracy in their monastic organisation and theories of state. This explains why the Pali works give insight into popular life more than the Sanskrit. The social life of commoners in the countryside with their sorrows and pleasures, their feuds and fellowships expresses itself in colourful stories,—in rhymes and verses. These unmotivated, spontaneous effusions reflect clearly the beliefs, manners, customs and means of livelihood of the masses. The stories of the Jatakas are such folk-tales accumulated through centuries, in the lips of the commoner. They are presented by the compiler in a casual, parenthetical manner only with the interpolation of the Boddhisatta motive. Sometimes this motive does not colour the incidents which have absolutely no bearing on the moral. The current of popular literature sometimes fade and dry, showed itself again in works like the Pañcatantra, Hitopadeśa, Kathāsaritsāgara, etc. Even the Purānas and the great Epics sometimes afford glimpses into real human life beneath the crust of poetic artistry and idealisation.

With this literature as our sources we have to appraise the place of religion and the form of religion in the life of the masses. Every religious faith may be divided into two compartments—one

Comparative objectivity of popular literature

Popular religion

is theology, the other rituals. Theology and philosophy is the concern of saints and logicians; the rites and rituals are the peoples' affair. As in any other country, in India also it is seen that in the early stages of corporate life, man,

Non Aryan.                      instead of bravely facing the ordeals of nature, lost his nerves before the unknown;

from ignorance came fear, from fear propitiation and deification of the unknowable. Whatever was beyond the ken of knowledge and control became mystic and divine, a ready answer to all queries was available in animism. The only escape from danger was fetish-worship. In stones, in animals, in trees, everywhere the aboriginal Indian tribes scented the existence of gods, demons and fairies ready to pounce upon the unwary.<sup>1</sup> Between these animal and totem divinities of the aboriginal non-Aryan tribes and elemental and astral divinities of the Aryans, there is not much difference. Indra, Agni, Pavan and Varuna are symbols of elemental forces beyond human control.

Aryan

The cultivator who had no mechanical devices to cope against the vagaries of the monsoons, fell to propitiating the god of the rains. Unable to grapple with the furies of fire man worshipped Rudra, to stop the onslaught of storms and floods the air-god and the water-god had to be appeased. The professional priest now stepped in to bank upon the superstitious veneration and fear of the people. Between the scared man and the remorseless god, he intervened with the much-needed charms and simples, magics and amulets. Gradually the original elemental gods,—the brood of savage ignorance and folly were nursed into the brains of the intellectual to grow into full-fledged supernatural gods, each symbolising a particular virtue. Rudra, the fire-god became Siva, haunting the crematorium—the ideal of sacrifice and renunciation. The rain-god became

<sup>1</sup> Ample traces of these are available in the Jātakas and in South Indian literature and inscriptions

the king of gods—conqueror of demons, the symbol of order and righteous government. Kālī represented power, Viṣṇu love and preservation of life, the custodian of *élan vital*.

Sectarianism and ritualism These gods with their respective virtues became the stock-in-trade of different religious sects. The hostility among the Saiva, Śākta, Vaiṣṇava and Saura were sedulously perpetuated by the man-god who stood between man and god. Rooted in the vested interests of the intermediary, popular religion spread new offshoots. A paraphernalia of rituals and ceremonies, distinctive marks of different sects,—hostility between the faithful and the unbeliever were the crop of this new development.<sup>1</sup> Thus popular rituals which at the beginning of economic struggle was confined to an instinctive devotion begotten of fear, ripened in the course of the rise of a new economic class into multifarious rites and practices, divisions and conflicts.

Of course the works of savants contained the gospel of unity within many, of concord of the divers, of godhead above the gods. But the riddles of theology or speculative knowledge are not our concern. We are concerned only with peoples' rites and peoples' religions which are the direct products of the struggle for existence,—not with that mystic core of religion which is reserved for the wise and the learned.

The Priesthood It is also admitted that there were sages who cast aside wealth and fortunes and spent their life to unravel the mysteries of the universe. In ancient Egypt and Babylon and in Mediæval Europe we see the wealth of the nation accumulated in temples and churches and monasteries, that taking advantage of this wealth and human failings, the priest captured the supreme

<sup>1</sup> Inscriptions down from the time of the Guptas and observations of the Chinese pilgrims show the multiplicity of sects and rituals which divided both the Buddhist and Brahmanical communities.

power of the state and to defend this 'divine property against unbelieving and heretical interlopers, revelled in all sorts of intrigues, bloodshed and treason. It is true that the Indian picture is not blackened with such deplorable savagery practised in the name of religion. But even in this sacred cradle of spiritual culture, the worldly and secular priests far outnumbered the renouncing anchorite,—the *dhammadhaya*, *latajatila* and *kukhalatapasa* grew like mushrooms all around (Jat I 375, II 406, 147, III 137, 310, 541, Mbh XII 120 8, 158 18f, Arth I 11)

The treasury and garner of the monk swelled with the produce of the *brahmadeya* and *deratra* and such like property assigned to him free of taxes. Everywhere Brahmanas are seen enjoying tax free land to the extent of thousands of *larisas*, producing food crops by means of the ox and the plough and gangs of slaves and serfs and living with the power and splendour of kings<sup>1</sup>. Or sometimes the revenues of whole lots of villages are assigned to the Brahmanas by royal charter, the burden of replenishing these gaps in the royal treasury falls on the rest of the people. For this investment of public money what returns society receives from the average Brahmana? At most a few couplets of royal eulogy (Jat V 23, 484), the solution of a dream and interpretation of omens (Jat I 272) or performance of costly sacrifices for the propitiation of the gods. To the credulous he sold the privilege of rendering homage to the person of a woman who was believed to have borne a child to Brahma (Jat IV 376). Wealth and social prestige gave him further powers in state and society. The priest became the chief adviser to the king in matters temporal and spiritual (*atthadhammanusa saka*, Jat II 105, 125, 173, 175, 203, 264, III 21, 115, 206, 317, 337, 400, etc). Sometimes he made his office

<sup>1</sup> Da III : 1 IV : 1 VII : 1 XXIII : 1 Ma 90

hereditary (Jāt. I. 437). As the sole exponent of canon law he sat in the hall of judgment and extended his power to the wider regions of civil law—of *vyavahāra* and *vinicchaya* and not infrequently traded with his judicial decisions (lañcakhādako, kuṭavinicchayiko, Jāt. V. 1, 228; VI. 131). Sometimes he flattered the conquering zeal of the king so that in the whole of India “he will become the sole king and I the sole housepriest” (ekapurohita, Jāt. III. 159). All the while the recipient of *bhogagāmas* and *brahmadeyas* increasingly invested his wealth in commercial ventures or following the fourfold Vaiśya pursuits of agriculture, cattle-rearing, trade and usury grew into a multi-millionaire (asitikoṭivibhavo) capitalist interest and basked in the sun-shine of the court. His daily pension from the king amounted to 100, 500 or 1,000 *kahāpaṇas* (Mn. II. 163; Sn. I. 82; Dhṛp. 204 Com.) He is seen in the role of great magnates sending 500 wagons from East to West (Jāt. IV. 7; V. 471). He is seen to multiply his wealth sailing with cargo and slaves and servants to the Far Eastern Islands (Jāt. IV. 15; cf. VI. 208). He is seen to function as king’s treasurer (Jāt. I. 439; E.I. IX. 33. iii). As the cult of Mammon grew among the traders in religion, megalomaniac bounties became a fashion with their royal patrons and proteges.

The gifts of *brahmadeya* imposed by priesthood on temporal authority by cajoles and threats  
 Private and official bounty conducted to a rapid concentration of land in the hand of secular Brāhmanas<sup>1</sup> who are so prominent by their landed wealth in folk literature, although in didactic pieces cultivation of land is assigned exclusively to Vaiśyas. Private munificence vied with the royal. An early Brāhmī inscription in Mathura records a perpetual endowment by a lord out of the monthly interest whereof 100 Brāhmanas should be served daily (E.I. XXI. 10). From a single day’s

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, pp. 311

itinerary, a Brāhmaṇa begs sufficient money to buy slaves male and female (Jāt. III. 313).

Nor was the Buddhist *saṃgha* immune from the corrupting influences of gold. The Karle and Nasik Cave inscriptions show how the extravagant bounties of Saka princes flowed indiscriminately into permanent endowments to Brāhmaṇas and to the *saṃgha*. Kuṣāna inscriptions from Mathura tell the same story (E. I. XXI. 10). The Buddhist monasteries are so often found overflowing with gain and honour (lābhasakkāra) 'like five rivers' (Jāt. I. 449; II. 415; III. 126; Dh's Com. on Therīg. 92 ff), which undermine their ascetic purity (Mn. 76, 79). They maintained slaves and servants who begged alms on their behalf (Jāt. III. 49) or served as gardener or went on shopping errands.<sup>1</sup> Female slaves and dancing girls are seen in the Brāhmanical (E. I. XIII. 7A) and Jaina temples to serve or perform for gods and their mortal agencies. The superintendent of female temple-slaves enters into the list of temple officials (E. I. XIII. 7A). They "are frequently represented on the Buddhist monuments as exhibiting their art at festivals."<sup>2</sup> Instances are not rare of sages falling from virtue as a result of surfeit from lay people (Jāt. V. 162), nor of people entering into the cloisters for comfort and lucre (I. 311, 340). Parents would choose for their boy the monastic life as the most comfortable means of a livelihood (Mv. I. 49). In the words of Mahāmoggallāna himself there was a vast number of deceitful tricksters (saṭhā māyāvino) who took to pabbajita not for belief but for livelihood (asaddhā jīvikatthā; Mn. 5). The whole set of disciplinary rules laid down by Buddha throughout the Vinaya-piṭaka reveals in fact a desperate effort to resist the rush of self-seekers and criminals in the

<sup>1</sup> Mrs Rhys Davids J R A S, 1901 p 863

<sup>2</sup> Bühler *Epigraphia Indica*, II 24

*samgha* and to stamp out corruption and luxury which public liberality constantly impinged upon it.

Inscriptions in Karle and Nasik Caves, those from the time of Kanishka and Huvishka (E. I., VIII. 17 f) and those in the Sanchi Topes are a sad commentary on the monastic vow of poverty. Out of the 285 votive inscriptions from Sanchi as many as 54 monks and 37 nuns appear as donors. "They must have obtained by begging the money required for making the rails and pillars. This was no doubt permissible, as the purpose was a pious one. But it is interesting to note the different proceedings of the Jaina ascetics who according to the Mathura and other inscriptions, as a rule, were content to exhort the laymen to make donations and to take care that this fact was mentioned in the votive inscriptions."<sup>1</sup>

The argument may be put forth that the *brahmadeya* and immunity from revenue accrued not to all Brāhmanas but only to *śrotriya*s or those who studied the Vedas and performed sacrifices thereby performing some social duty. The *Sāntiparva* indeed carefully demarcates pious Brāhmanas who are to be exempted, from secular Brāhmanas who are to be fleeced with taxes and forced labour. But is there any recognised hallmark of piety? The Brāhmanical works themselves show the priests haggling and bargaining for their fee (Sp. 29. 124f; cf. Arth. III. 14; Jāt. I. 343; III. 45). They were organised exactly on the lines of industrial guilds and laws are laid down for the division of their earnings (Manu, VIII. 210, 206; Nār. III. 5). The Pali literature, especially the Jātakas, show that the recipients of *brahmadeya* gifts of land as those of *lābhasakkāra* in the Buddhist Order were not devoted spiritualists. Even if it be accepted that wealth and privileges poured upon bona fide religious persons and

<sup>1</sup> Bühler, *Epigraphia Indica*, II 7.

orders, history has abundant proof that such a constant outflow corrupts even the purest recipient and works his ruin. At any rate, the state became the poorer and had to lay its fingers in the pockets of the toiler.

The pseudo-religious caste had not the monopoly of power and privileges. The other estates were aligned with them on identity of interests, known in the Dharmaśāstras as the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya. Although proofs are lacking of the existence of a group of hereditary military castes under the general name of Kṣatriya, still there is little doubt that there was a class of nobles who cultivated the arts of politics and war and occupied certain high posts of government. With the expansion of the king's family his kinsmen were absorbed in this class as generals, feudatory lords, governors and bureaucrats. Or, in the case of oligarchical tribes like the Sākya, the Koliyas, the Vṛjjis, the Mallas and later on the Rajput clans, the so-called Kṣatriya caste divided the tribal land among themselves. With land they monopolised political power. Their much-belauded republican government was confined to the *rājakulas*;—the *sāmantas*, *uparājas*, *amātyas* and other underlings enjoyed that much of wealth and power which their masters condescended to spare for them, and the slaves and hirelings who formed the majority in the state cultivated lands, gave their life in battles to defend their master's interests and obtained food and clothing or wages up to or more often below their living.<sup>1</sup>

Side by side with this class rose the class of merchants; proprietorship of vast landed estates went under the grip of capital. The *śreṣṭhīs* did not stop with sending fleets loaded with cargo to Java, Sumatra and the Eastern Archipelago; they also cultivated

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 23.



vast stretches of arable land by means of gangs of slaves and hirelings and thereby attained to the topmost rung of the economic ladder, familiar as *asitikoṭivibhavo*. Like the *gāmabhojaka* and the Brāhmaṇa magnates, the *seṭṭhi* accumulated huge quantities of grain which he cornered in times of scarcity and which thus gave him a sinister influence in society. He represents "a crosscut through the ancient system of castes, a plutocracy perpetuating itself as an aristocracy."<sup>1</sup> The *seṭṭhi* and the industrial *gaṇa* were powerful economic interests which had large influence in the policy of the state and which no king dared to defy. From this community was filled up the high post of financial adviser (*seṭṭhitthāna*) which presumably determined the economic policy and functions of the state and which often tended to be hereditary (Jāt. I. 231, 248; III. 475; IV. 62; V. 384). As owner of eighty crores he is found highly esteemed by king and by citizens and country-folk alike (*rājapūjito nagarajanapadapūjito*). As Fick says, the *seṭṭhi*, by virtue of his immense wealth, became indispensable to the king, as we find him constantly in his retinue.<sup>2</sup>

As in Europe of the 18th century it is seen that the economic content of democratic movements was the struggle of the rising bourgeoisie to seize power from the grip of the firmly entrenched clergy and nobles, so the ideal of Buddhist republicanism was the replacement of the Brāhmaṇa priesthood by the *seṭṭhis* and *gaṇapatis* and their royal allies. Against the Brāhmaṇical pretension to supremacy explicit in the fourfold caste order and asserted in many legends like that of Viśvāmitra, the Kṣatriya aspirant to Brāhmaṇism and that of Paraśurāma, the destroyer of Kṣatriyas twenty-one times all over India, the Buddhist works give precedence

Economic background  
of Buddhism.

<sup>1</sup> Washburn Hopkins, *India Old and New*, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 168

to Khattiyas over the Brāhmaṇa, Gahapati and Sudda and very often bursts into vigorous denunciation of the Brāhmaṇas with their sacrificial rites and sordid motives of gain. "The Khattiyas are superior, the Brāhmaṇas are inferior," so says Gotama (Ambaṭṭhasutta, Dn., cf. Jacobi: Jainasutras, pp. 225f). "The superior position of the Khattiyas in the Eastern countries and the corresponding decline of Brahmanical influence present themselves to us with irresistible necessity when we study the Pali Literature."<sup>1</sup> "The prevalence of merchants and traders (in the Sanchi Ins) seems to indicate, what indeed may be gathered also from the sacred books of the Buddhists, that this class was the chief stronghold of Buddhism."<sup>2</sup> The *setthi* and *gahapati* were the principal tax-paying class<sup>3</sup> and so had their axes to grind against the Brāhmaṇa exemptees swelling with wealth. The economic background of Buddhist heresy is the combination and revolt of the two powerful class interests—the military and the mercantile—against the old monopoly interests of Brāhmaṇa priesthood.

The mercantile interest served the *saṃgha* as lay *upāsakas*, built them *caityas* and *stūpas*, fed them with choice delicacies and rose to power and position. The long feud with Brāhmaṇism at last terminated into a compromise. The *setthi* and *gahapati* had their position acknowledged and with their purpose served, they let down the Buddhist and shifted their bounties and allegiance to the Brāhmaṇa. Inscriptions from the time of the Guptas record this change.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p 56 and the following pages for references. For the history of the struggle for supremacy between the two classes, R. C. Maumdar: *Corporate Life*, pp 366-72. Also *infra*, p 508

<sup>2</sup> Buhler, *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Fick, *op. cit.*, p. 79. For the 'marked leaning to aristocracy in ancient Buddhism' see Oldenberg: *Buddha*, pp. 155f

Thus the upper classes appropriated national wealth and political power. The slave and the hireling who with their toil built the edifice of civilisation and prosperity remained the deprived and despised underdogs of society. They were employed in gangs for the service of the rich. The slave was like his master's cattle. He had no juristic personality nor property. The male slave is seen to work on hire to feed his master, the female slave is seen to warm his bed. If sometimes they were treated well, it was in the same way as the owner cared for his cattle from his own interest or from prolonged association. The servant working for a wage or for share of profit had not the same luck. In most cases he was denied a living wage and a square meal. This landless proletariat remained at the lowest rung of the economic ladder. The lawgivers and politicians did not spare them the barest amenities of life.

The three aristocratic classes into whose hands concentrated national wealth form the *dwija* group—the impoverished *dāsa* class form the *Sūdra* group.<sup>1</sup> Of the so-called *Brāhmanas*, *Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas* many were impoverished by the shufflings of fate and relegated to the plebeian class. *Brāhmanas* and *gahapatīs* fallen from fortune appear as poorest farmers, artisans and hunters. In literature, sacred and profane, they appear with despised callings of quacks, king's orderlies, wood-cutters, petty traders and craftsmen and in every conceivable role. Scions of royal race defeated in battle or dice or victims of court or palace intrigue are seen to be reduced to begging or to slavery. The commercial magnate whose caravan was plundered by brigands or whose cargo was sunk in the ocean had to live by serving others. *Mahākaccana* illustrates the equality of castes by

<sup>1</sup> Mark the indiscriminate use of *dāsa*, *sūdra* and *dasavarna*, *śūdravarna*.

pointing out the uncontroverted fact that any one of the four castes, if he can become rich, may employ another of even superior caste to serve him as slave (Mn. 84; Suk. III. 369-75). Against Senaka's contention that "wise men and fools, men educated or uneducated, do service to the wealthy, although they be high-born and he be base-born," Bodhisatta has to take his stand on the next world to prove the superiority of a poor sage over a wealthy fool (Jāt. VI. 356ff). The cant confession is made in the Mahābhārata that wealth confers family dignity while poverty takes it away (III. 192. 21). Social precedence was thus determined not by birth but by wealth. Thus the priestly caste theory which was sought to be foisted on society broke down under the inexorable pressure of material circumstances and gave place to hostile classes belonging to different economic categories.

Aligned with slaves and hirelings was another class,—  
The Mleccha the low castes and low crafts who under the general brand of *mleccha* were degraded even below the Sūdra. The pariahs pursued arts and trades which the society could not dispense with but which repelled the sophisticated sense of refinement and culture. The Pali works testify that they lived outside the village gate and city gate, *i.e.*, in isolation from civilised society. The habitat assigned them by the lawgivers was the hill and forest or the cremation ground. Tree is to be their shed, iron their ornament and pariah arts their profession (Manu, X. 50; Mbh. XIII. 48. 32). They exposed themselves to any length of corporal punishment if they defiled with their filthy presence the air and water in the vicinity of their superiors. They were denied the great honour and privilege enjoyed by the slaves and serfs, that of serving their masters.

It is true that the door of the *samgha* was open to all these people excepting the slaves. But they are very seldom

seen as members of the Order ; firstly, because the homeless, condition was often a reaction from  
Spiritual culture for  
the *mleccha*.
surfeit of wealth and power which these people were totally denied ; secondly, because the poverty and degradation which was their habitual lot did not foster that high enlightenment and spiritual consciousness which actuate monastic zeal. " Judging from their isolated and low position which excludes them from all communion with the Aryan people and as a consequence of this, from all participation in spiritual life the actual existence of such holy men is extremely doubtful." <sup>1</sup> They were at least rare.

The pronounced social contrast between the two classes is expressed through the familiar Pali phrases ' mahābhogakula ' and ' daḍiddakula,' ' sadhanā,' and ' adhanā,' ' sugatā,' and ' duggatā,' through the lamentations of Gālava (V. 106. 11) and of Yudhiṣṭhira  
Social contrast.
(V. 71. 25f) in the Mahābhārata that one destitute of wealth is a wretch, that there is no virtue for the poor, that wealth is an essential contributory factor to the cultivation of virtue. In the Pali passage quoted at the beginning of this Book, ignorance, low birth, poverty, vice and purgatory form an unbroken chain, while wisdom, pedigree, wealth, virtue and heaven constitute a set of counterparts going together. This is not an isolated passage and recurs almost *verbatim* throughout the canons (Mn. 93, 96 ; An. II. 85 ; Sn. I. 93 ; Pug. IV. 19). Virtue thus tended to be a monopolistic concern of the upper orders with ample leisure and ample wealth ; and in the preservation of this leisure and wealth they ultimately made a caricature

<sup>1</sup> Fick, *op. cit.* p 51. 10 among the 259 authors included in the anthology of Theragāthā and 4 out of the 73 in the Therīgāthā come from the ranks of the poor and despised : actor, pariah, fisherman labourer, slave, trapper, ' poor family,' etc., etc., about 4 2 p c. The bulk comes from Brahmins and aristocrats and a few from among the artisans (Paramatthadīpanī).

of virtue which poisoned the social organism and led to metamorphosis and decay.

These are not to deny that this social inequality was not as glaring in India as in other ancient cultures. Class differences did not assume those horrible and destructive proportions in India as they did in ancient Rome, Greece and Egypt and later in France and Russia. That implacable hatred between the Patrician and the Plebeian, the perennial and seething disaffection of the helots always ready to burst and explode the Spartan state and the enslavement of the whole people below the Pharaoh with his priesthoods and entourage in the land of the Pyramids,—these scenes are not witnessed in India. It is an interesting subject for investigation why class conflict and class consciousness did not mature in this country.<sup>1</sup>

The chief reason is that the zemindary system could not develop in ancient India. The freeholder was real master of his arable and homestead land. The small farmer defrayed his expenses cultivating his own land; in the eyes of law he was equal with the great landowner—the *asitikoṭivibhavo kuṭumbiko* who employed slaves and serfs to cultivate his fields. Generally he had no fear of losing his property except in cases of famine or a natural calamity. Ordinarily he remained in hereditary enjoyment of his patrimony unless he pitted himself against the powerful and defaulted in the payment of revenues. The *gāmabhojaka* was not a zemindar to whom land was farmed; he enjoyed the revenues of and ruling powers in his *bhogagāma* but not ownership and usufruct.<sup>2</sup> The independent small freeholders and craftsmen

Circumstances  
favouring class com-  
promise: 1. The  
lower middle class.

<sup>1</sup> Class struggles were rare but not altogether absent though evidences are lacking. The Kaivarta revolt in the reign of Mahāpāla in Bengal is a positive instance.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, Bk. I, Ch. III.

may be termed the petty bourgeoisie of ancient India who from the last few centuries are being gradually declassed and levelled with the proletarian mass. This middle class formed the majority distributed over a wide range and this class of lower Vaisyas held the balance between the Sūdra and Dwija classes. Society was a complex hierarchy and because the centre was heavy, poise was maintained.

The second point to note is that the exploited elements in India were never welded into a homogeneous mass with the consciousness of a common class

2. *Exploited class,*  
a composite body.

interest. It is seen even now that the

Savara discards the Caṇḍāla as an untouchable as much as he is himself hated as a low caste by the Brāhmaṇa. The exponents of divine will have created and perpetuated this division among the *hīnavarṇas* with masterly skill. The slaves and hired folk too could not combine with the pariahs,—they could not even develop a communal consciousness among themselves. The reason for this is that they were not numerically strong like the slaves in Rome and Egypt and they lived scattered and distributed in different localities. We have no *dāsagāma* or *bhatikagāma* as we hear of *caṇḍalagāma* or *nesādagāma*. The latter lived in villages of their own. The slaves and wage-earners lived with their masters or were scattered in their several sheds. The slaves were not always treated inhumanly and felt the family ties of their masters; so discontent did not spread sufficiently deep for violent action. The wage-earners had no means to organise, no facilities to build guilds and unions like *śreṇī*, *saṃgha*, *pūga*, etc., as the skilled artisans used to do to safeguard their interests. They had no fixity of dwelling and fixity of terms nor any security of service. Standing between vagrancy and starvation, eking out a miserable existence by any chance engagement, this mass of unskilled labour was thrown entirely at the mercy of the employer.

The third reason is that the lower classes were not given access to the secrets of knowledge which gives confidence and voice of protest to the inarticulate

3 The Sudra kept  
in ignorance under threat

For a Sudra it is sacrilege to profane the *śāstras* with his inquisitiveness From the earliest traceable times, these people were kept in dire ignorance The holy *mantra* was constantly dinned in their ears that their only path to salvation was through service of the higher *varnas* Whoever had the temerity to question this authoritarian system or to strike at the closed doors of knowledge had no escape from the inquisitorial vigilance of the Brahmana and the retribution which it brought. The legend of Sambukī, a Sūdra *hīnavarna* who dared to perform Brahmanical rites and who for this inexpressible offence forfeited heavenly bliss though killed in Rāma's hands is only a case in point. The Sūdra and Mleccha were never allowed to think and feel their position on earth.

Thus it is that the multi-caste society, compartmentally divided, integrated the parts The mechanism of class collaboration was a slowly built process The oldest books hark back to the existence of only one *varna*, that of Brahmana or Deva in the dawning era of generation (Rv 10 90 5, 10. 121. 1, B<sub>1</sub> Up. 1 4 10 11; Mun Up 1. 1) This primogenial *varna* or uni-caste society existed only during the figment of Satyayuga recalled to emphasise Aryan solidarity and the bliss that was yet to be conquered against the hostile surroundings of the time. The selfsame literature present a two-caste society, emerged, not from a split of the primogenial body but from the impact with another body or race, viz, the Anāīya, Dasyu, Sūdra or Asura (Rv 1 5 1 8, 1 103 3, 1 117 21, 1 230 8; 3 34. 9, 5 28 4, 6 22 10, 7 6. 3, 10 22. 7f, Av 19 62 3; 19. 7 8 1, B<sub>1</sub> Up 3 3 1) This is not class war but a war between two families of races, the aboriginal Asura or



Dāsa on the one hand, the aggressor Deva or Ārya on the other.<sup>1</sup>

The two-*varna* war fought for the possession of the heaven, the earth and the seas, for the charms of women, greed of wealth and lust of power, legendised in innumerable *kathas* and *gāthās*, was later attenuated into the esoteric doctrine of struggle between the soul and the flesh, the sentient and the obtrude, the *sattva* and the *tamas*. This symbolisation of the *devāsura* legend was no doubt an after-thought, inasmuch as the Asuras sometimes beat the wisdom of the Devas and the Devas acquire the secrets from their rivals by methods not very *sāttvic*.<sup>2</sup> The spiritual antitheses of *āryabhāva* and *dasabhāva* were moulded into the synthesis of *brahmabhava*,—‘sarvé varnā brāhmanā brahmajāśca sarvé’ (Sp. 318 89), ‘sarvam khalvidam brahma sarvam brahmamaya jagat’ (Ch Up III XIV 1). But the social antitheses found their synthesis not in monism but in pluralism. The casteless or classless millennium was an idea, never a reality. The two *varna* system gave way to a complex hierarchy, the Ārya ramifying into three *varnas* which were interwoven into countless sub castes and mixed castes. The Brahman remained a cosmogonical and an ontological conception, it never became a social entity. It did not regulate the social attitude of the so-called Brāhmanas and the privileged classes. The theism of *Brahmayidyā* accordingly remained at the apex of the social pyramid. The popular religion of polytheistic and pseudo-theistic cults permeated the body and the base.

<sup>1</sup> The Rg veda is replete with references to this protracted socio-caste struggle. “Viśvasmād śmadhamanindra dasyun viśo dasirakṣno rapraśastah, 5 28 4 Lord Indra! You have deprived these Dasyus of all merits. You have made the Dasa people blame worthy. Again,

‘Akarmadasyurabhi no amantira ranyabrato amanusaḥ tvam tasya m trahan vadhar dasasya dambhaya,’ 10 22 7f. We are surrounded by Dasyus, averse to incantations having other vows and dehumanised. Oh killer of enemies! Kill these inflated Dāsas.

<sup>2</sup> Eg., Kaca, son of the divine sage Bṛhaspati, steals the secret of elixir (asṣṭīvanī vidyā) from the Asura sage Śukra by ingratiating with the latter’s daughter.

## CHAPTER VI

### MATERIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN CULTURE

So the pet patriotic tradition of a super-mundane Indian culture does not stand the test of the scientist. In the process of historical evolution, hard material facts are exposed with crude reality. On scientific analysis the glorified missionary and cultural enterprises beyond the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal reveal similar social forces as worked behind the European migrations to Africa and Asia in the last century or recent Jewish exodus from Germany under pressure of the Nazis.

The abundant instances of sea voyages in the Jātaka stories all relate to commercial ventures in the Eastern Islands or to even baser economic motives.<sup>1</sup> The early diplomatic exchanges between princes were very often accompanied by the exchange of some rare agricultural or commercial goods. It has been held on good authority that most of the embassies from Tamil kings going with tribute to China were merely trading expeditions on joint account of the ambassadors.<sup>2</sup> The great trek to Java from north-western India was a part of the process of Saka migration which was stimulated by the anarchical conditions of northern India and by the conversion of the Bay of Cutch into a salt desert accompanied by the diversion of the rivers that watered it. The defeat of the white Huns by Sassa-

<sup>1</sup> One of them narrates how a settlement of carpenters consisting of 1000 families took contracts for houses and furnitures—but after taking a large advance failed to do their job. Harassed by their creditors they built a ship and slipped off at dead of night with their families into the ocean. IV 159.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. A. S. 1869 pp. 490 ff.

nians and Turks in the latter half of the 6th century intercepted their retreat northwards. There were military pressures and defeat from the Maukharis of Kanauj. These were followed by the Turkish advance from the north and Arab raids both by sea (637) and through Persia (650-60), the overthrow of the Buddhist Saharais by their usurping Brāhmaṇist minister Chach and his persecution of the Jats,—a series of incidents which explain a steady outflow of north-Indians southward from the ports of Sind and Gujarat which was stimulated by the tradition of Javan prosperity.

Prior to the ninth century from when the decline of Buddhism stimulated large-scale migration of the faithful from Bengal and Kalinga to the Eastern Islands,<sup>1</sup> the commercial intercourse of the Buddhist merchants set the stage for missionary undertakings and later for assumption of political supremacy.<sup>2</sup> In the memoirs of Chinese pilgrims the great Bengal emporium of Tāmralipta appears as a conspicuous Buddhist settlement. Indo-Chinese religious intercourse beginning from the 4th century A.D. was preceded by flourishing Indo-Chinese commerce from the 1st century A.D. This commercial and colonising activity as well as religious intercourse simultaneously reached their height in the time of I-tsing who records the itinerary of sixty Chinese pilgrims and bears witness to prosperous Indian colonies in the Archipelago and the East Asiatic coast which served as convenient halting places for missionaries.

So the spread of Buddhism in the far East with Indian art traditions, the *dharmaghoṣa* and the *dharmavijaya* are ultimately traced to the political and economic circumstances of northern India and neighbouring countries.

<sup>1</sup> Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 498.

<sup>2</sup> Col. Phayre : *History of Burma Race*.

The political intercourse between the Caesars and Kuṣāns as recorded by Roman historians is explained by the fact that "their commercial importance as controllers of one of the main trade routes between the East and the West made the friendship of the Kuṣāns or Śakas who held the Indus valley and Bactria a matter of the highest importance to Rome."<sup>1</sup> These commercial transactions brought arts and ideas in their train. Roman astronomy, Roman coinage, Roman art traditions which inspired Indo-Bactrian plastic art at Gandhāra, all flowed through the streams of Roman gold.

Thus the noble cultural heritage of Greater India dissolves into a *melieu* of material forces operating under the inexorable dictates of Nature. Royal fury, foreign invasion, embroiling debts, loss of wealth and lust of gold,—these motive forces set peoples and races on move. They only carried with them a gilded layer of Indian lore and Indian cultural traditions, the social and cultural values which were impregnated by the class-characteristics in their own country. Literature and art reflected this class stamp of society. Like literature, art was divided, though not very sharply, into two schools,—the royal art executed at Sarnath, Karle and Nasik and the folk art carved at Barbut and Sanchi. The wide activity of the guilds in spheres legislative, political and cultural and their importance recognised in all theoretical works, shows the magnitude of economic influence. In the rise and fall of Empires, the same immutable laws were working. The great dynastic interests were supported by the rise of the Brāhmana and the Setṭhi on one hand and by foreign invasions on the other which threatened big properties and vested interests. In the rise and decay of religions the same principles are revealed. It would not be gratifying for the Holy Buddha

<sup>1</sup> Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, Part I, p. 490.

to find his immortal message reduced to a medley of silly superficial rituals. He would not be flattered at his devotees worshipping his nails and teeth instead of practising the four *vijjās* and the eight *maggas*. But such is the irresistible march of history. Bereft of the economic interests which called the Buddhist message to fight the existing order with their arms and wealth, Buddhist mission died as a religious force in the country and was transplanted into foreign countries with a new and congenial economic setting.

‘*artha eva pradhānah*’ so says Kauṭilya; *arthamūlau hi dharmakāmāvitī* (Arth. I. 7).

## APPENDIX

### THE DATE OF THE ARTHAŚĀSTRA

The controversy over the date of the Arthaśāstra attributed to Kauṭilya has of late tended to subside and scholars with rare exceptions are complacently building their theses upon the theory of Vincent Smith and Shamasastri assigning the work to the 4th century B.C. The plea to bring it down to the 3rd century A.D. set forth by Jolly in the introduction to his edition of the Arthaśāstra and by Winternitz in the third volume of the History of Indian Literature has had no wide acceptance and was weakened by the refutation of Shamasastri and N. N. Law. In an article in the J.R.A.S., 1929 (pp. 77-89) it was shown by *another scholar that the comparison of certain expressions and passages in the Arthaśāstra with Aśvaghoṣa's Buddhacarita on the one hand and with Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā and the Laṃkāvatārasūtra on the other placed the book with tolerable certainty between the beginning of the Christian era and about 150 A.D., or at most 250 A.D.* In the Political History of Raychaudhuri 300 B.C. and 100 A.D. are taken as the upper and lower limits. Without any pretension to speak the last word on the subject a few clues to the chronological mystery may be gathered which expose the 4th century theory to considerable amount of criticism and incline the balance of evidence in favour of the 1st century after Christ.

The priority of the Arthaśāstra to the Smṛtis of Manu and Yājñavalkya has been sought to be proved by comparison of their social and political systems. This is based on the false assumptions that the theories in the Arthaśāstra

correlate to facts and institutions without fail and that there was absolute uniformity of beliefs and practices in Magadha and the Brāhmarṣideśa or land of Delhi and the Eastern Punjab where the sacred institutes were born. The points of analogy moreover are not less if not more outspoken than those of disparity. As between the Arthaśāstra and Manu, Yājñavalkya and Nārada affinity is very close with regard to the laws of hire and contract, of debt, deposit, witness, gift, stolen property and ownership; robbery, defamation and intimidation; assault, marital rights and proprietary rights of women and inheritance. Manu and Yājñavalkya attest the fixing of price of merchandise. There is also similarity with Manu on the existence of private and communal ownership of land side by side, acceptance of a day's work from common artisans in lieu of taxes, salt as a royal monopoly among other things (land-grants dating from the time of the Śātavāhanas frequently confirm that salt was a royal monopoly under their rule) and reference to the Magadha among mixed castes. The argument that the Arthaśāstra knows only four kinds of slaves while Manu seven and Nārada fifteen was put forth from oversight for the Arthaśāstra distinctly refers to the (1) *udaradāsa*—born slave, (2) *krīta*—purchased, (3) *āhitaka*—acquired by mortgage, (4) *sakṛdātmādhātā*—voluntary enslavement, (5) *daṇḍapraṇīta*—enslaved by court-decree, (6) *gṛhajāta*—born in the house, (7) *dāyāgata*—acquired by inheritance from ancestors, (8) *dhvajāhṛta*—captured in war or raids. It is moreover pointed out that slaves might be acquired in other ways that are left unspecified (*labdhakṛitānām anyatamāni*). Thus the Arthaśāstra list is wider than Manu's (VIII. 415) and embraces almost all the varieties cited by Nārada (V. 26-28) only under more numerous sub-heads except a few which may have been later development. It is most unsafe to derive chronological conclusions from comparison between *śāstra* literature which

not only ignore facts on many instances but represent theories and institutions of a much earlier age than the one when they are composed. Still the closer resemblance of the *Arthaśāstra* to the later *dharmaśāstras* than to the earlier *dharmaśūtras* of Gautama, Bodhāyana, etc., cannot be left entirely out of account.

A conspicuous example of this analogy is found in the currency system described in the three types of literature and in Pali works.

Commenting on *Suttavibhanga*, the *Pārājika*, 11-16, Buddhaghosa says that in Bimbisāra's time in Rājagaha :—

1 Kahāpana	=	20 māsakas
1 pāda	=	5 māsakas
1 Kahāpana	=	4 pādas

This *kahāpana* however, he warns, is the ancient *nīlakahāpana* not the *Rudradāmaka*—a depreciated standard adopted and followed from *Rudradāman*'s time.

Sāriputta again in his commentary on the passage of Buddhaghosa, explains that this *Rudradāmaka* is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a *nīlakahāpana*.

From a comparison of the weight of the silver *dharana* as given by Manu, Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu and of the *Rudradāmaka kahāpana* it is found that they bear the same ratio in weight as the *nīlakahāpana* to the latter, so that the *dharana* and the *nīlakahāpana* may be identified denoting the same class of silver coins.<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that while Gautama and Kātyāyana, like the Pali texts retain the term *kārsāpana* for silver as well as copper coins, Manu, Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu reserve *kārṣāpana* only for copper coins and invent the separate term *dharana* for silver coins. Probably the Pali term *nīlakahāpana* was devised to remove this source of confusion.

<sup>1</sup> See C. D. Chatterji's article on Numismatic Data in Pali Literature in B. C. Law's *Buddhist Studies*, pp. 424 ff.



Now the Arthaśāstra agrees with the later law-books in this respect. Its silver coin is *dharāṇa* and its copper coin *kārṣāpaṇa*. It also agrees with Manu, Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu in respect of the prescribed weight of the standard gold and copper money,—the *suvarṇa* and the *paṇa* or *kārṣāpaṇa*—but differs as regards the weight of the standard silver coin—the *dharāṇa*. This difference may be easily accounted for. The prescribed weight of *dharāṇa* in the Arthaśāstra closely approximates to the prescribed weight of the *suvarṇa* and *paṇa* the margin being explicable by the fact that since the weight of the *gaurasārṣapa* and the *guṇja* or *kṛṣṇala* might slightly vary in different parts of India, the ratio between the two given in the *Smṛtis* may not be the exact standard. It seems that the author of the Arthaśāstra aimed at a currency reform whereby the same weight standard could be prescribed for the three classes of coins like many other projected reforms in other spheres of administration.<sup>1</sup>

Shamasastri claims that the *kārṣāpaṇa* which according to Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* was in earlier times equivalent to 16 *māṣas*, indicated the Arthaśāstra's equation of 1 *suvarṇa* or *karṣa* to 16 *māṣas*. He has confused between the weight standard of *karṣa* (to which conformed the standard gold coin *suvarṇa*) with the silver money called *kārṣāpaṇa*. In the Arthaśāstra's table 1 *karṣa* = 16 *māṣas* = 80 *guṇjas* or *kṛṣṇalas* (or *ratīs*) according to *Smṛti* nomenclature while a *kārṣāpaṇa* weighs 56 grains or 32 *kṛṣṇalas*.<sup>2</sup> The *kārṣāpaṇa* of Patañjali may of course be identified with the *dharāṇa* of the Arthaśāstra which is equated with 16 silver *māṣas*. But this equation is repeated

<sup>1</sup> C. D. Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 423 ff

<sup>2</sup> The average weight of the Rudradāma's *lakṣapaṇa* or old silver punch-marked coins is 42 grains. Therefore 1 *nīlakṣapaṇa* =  $\frac{42 \times 4}{3}$  grs. = 32 *kṛṣṇalas* or *ratīs*, 1 *ratī* being approximately equal to 1.75 grs. C. D. Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 423 ff.

with Manu (VII. 135-36), Yājñavalkya (1. 364) and Ṛiṣṇu (IV. 11-12) and in this as in many other respects the author of the Arthaśāstra may have merely lined up with contemporary Smṛti literature without caring whether the system described prevailed in his time actually or only in tradition; or the system may have been revived from the 1st century A.D.

The standard gold coin in the Arthaśāstra is *suvarṇa* which in earlier literature is *niṣka*, *śatamāna* and *kṛṣṇala* and in later ones *dināra*. But no chronological demarcation can be drawn between the *suvarṇa* and the *dināra*. The *dināra* never became a standard token coin all over India though it is found here and there from the 1st century A.D., while on the other hand the *suvarṇa* continues to be the standard as late as in Usavadāta's Nasik inscriptions equaling 35 *kārṣāpaṇas*. Thus the mention of *suvarṇa* as standard gold coin places the Arthaśāstra positively later than the stage when the *niṣka* was the current coin as represented in the Epics and the Jātakas, but not necessarily earlier than the 1st century B.C. when the *dināra* began to obtain currency in parts of India.

The comparison of the political and social theories of the Arthaśāstra with the fragments of Megasthenes bespeaks a similar wrong mode of approach towards the chronological problem as its comparison with the legal injunctions. A political philosopher is no historian. Had Kauṭilya been the maker of the Maurya Empire and founder of the dynasty as well as the author of the monumental treatise it is of course likely that his pet theories would have been worked out in practice and Megasthenes' testimony agreed in many details over them. But Megasthenes differs no less than he agrees. He refers to a good war-practice that crops and lands are not destroyed by belligerents; the Arthaśāstra definitely enjoins such devastation (IX. 1). His affirmation that infliction of injury on royal artisans or

evasion of municipal tithe entailed death sentence is not found in the Arthaśāstra's penal code—which is more akin to that of Manu and Yājñavalkya. The evidences of Megasthenes on writing, on famine and on usury though faulty, contain an indirect truth which substantially militates against the Arthaśāstra.

While these conflicting evidences are dismissed on the score of the rashness of Megasthenes' statements the observation on non-existence of slavery is adduced as tallying with the liberal rules of the Arthaśāstra on slaves. But in the Arthaśāstra's time there were *mleccha* slaves who are summarily passed over, but who obviously far outnumbered the *ārya* slaves and for whom there was no mitigation. Megasthenes therefore seems to have either made a statement without knowledge of facts and consequently of no worth, or the *mleccha* slaves must not have been so numerous in his day as in the time of the Arthaśāstra.

Megasthenes and archaeological excavations show that Pāṭaliputra was surrounded by a timber palisade and an outer ditch. The Arthaśāstra is much against the use of wood because "fire finds a happy abode in it" and wants three ditches to be dug round a fort (II. 3).

The supposition that the Arthaśāstra reflects pre-Buddhistic society does not stand in the face of the clear reference to *stūpa* (XIII. 2) and to the *śākyas* and *ājīvikas*. The proscription of these people along with the *sūdra* and the *pravrajita* (III. 10) in ceremonials devoted to the gods and the manes is characteristic of the movement of Brāhmanical revival which is held to have begun from about the time of the Sungas. The use of the word *śākya* to denote a *bhikṣu* is of special significance. We do not come across such use earlier than in Kuṣān inscriptions where the word *śākyabhikṣu* is commonplace<sup>1</sup> and later in the Divyāvadāna.

<sup>1</sup> For references, see *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. X, p. 222.

So far for the weakness of the 4th century theory. There are positive evidences of more weight which point to the 1st century A.D.

The strongest point in support of the post-Christian origin of the Arthaśāstra is the structure of the text. It is striking that it not only expounds a methodology of treating a subject which is foreign to earlier works but actually and scrupulously follows that methodology (*tantrayukti*). The medical treatise of Suśruta which is assigned to about the 2nd century A.D. and the Pali works Nettipakarana and Peṭakopadesa belonging to about the 1st century A.D. follow the same order and expound it just in the same manner. Suśruta in particular agrees with the Arthaśāstra in definition and even in the number of the *tantrayuktis* which is 32 (Uttaratantra LXV). The nomenclature is also the same except that for the Arthaśāstra's 'upamānam' and 'uttarapakṣa' Suśruta substitutes 'anekanta' and 'nirṇaya' respectively. The definitions resemble not only in idea but in many cases also in language. A few parallels may be quoted.

Arthaśāstra	Suśruta
1. Yam-artham-adhikṛtyo-cyate tad-adhikaranam.	Same.
2. Śāstrasya prakaranā-nupūrvī-vidhānam.	Prakaranānupūrvyā-bhīṣitam vidhānam.
3. Vākyayojanā yogah	Yena vākyam yujyate sa yogah.
4. Samāsa-vākyam-uddeśah.	Samāsa-kathanam-uddeśah.
5. Vyāsavākyam nirddeśah.	Vistāravacanam nirddeśah.
6. Yād-anukṛtam-arthhād-āpadyate sārthhāpattih.	Yad-akīrtitam-arthhād-āpadyate sārthhāpattih.
7. Ubbhayato-hetumānarthasamśayah.	Ubbhaya-hetudarśanam samśayah.

## Arthaśāstra

## Suśruta

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 8. Yena vākyam samāpyate sa<br>vākyaśeṣah. | Yena padenā-nuktena<br>vākyam samāpyate sa<br>vākyaśeṣah. |
| 9. Paravākyam-aprati-<br>siddham-anumatam. | Paramatam-aprati-<br>siddham-anumatam.                    |
| 10. Atīśayavarṇanā vyākhyānam.             | Atīśayopavarṇanam<br>vyākhyānam.                          |
| 11. Abhipluta-vyapakarṣanam-<br>apavargah. | Abhivyāpyāpakarṣanam-<br>apavargah, etc., etc.            |

That Suśruta's definitions are a little more elaborate and precise is easily explained by the improvement undergone in a few intervening decades. It may be noted that later literature do not formulate but simply follow the method and in them its divisions evolve and multiply as for example in the *Samhitā* of Caraka which follows 34 sub-divisions (*Siddhisthāna*, XII).<sup>1</sup>

The reference to Cīna in the *Arthaśāstra* is a distinct pointer to an age much later than the year 249 B.C. when the Ts'in dynasty came to rule in China whence the name Cīna was introduced in India. The significant name appears in no Indian literature of proved earlier date. The earliest Pali reference to Cīna and Cīnapaṭṭa occurs in the *Buddhavamsa* and the *Apadāna* (l. 14; 406, 14), the two Pali compilations that were not included in the canon earlier than in the 1st century B.C. The instances in the *Epics* are evidently later interpolations as is further proved by the different readings in available recensions. To parade their geographical and racial knowledge the pedants of a later age introduced the Cīnas, the Śakas, the Yavanas (sometimes even the Romakas and the Pārasikas) and other generic terms indicating foreign barbarians along with the indigenous barbarians who existed from an older time and

<sup>1</sup> See B. M. Barua : *Old Brāhmi Inscriptions*, p. 235.

had place in the original text. These Cīnas inhabited the borderlands along the Bāhlika, the Tibetan valleys and the Prāgyyotiṣa and possibly implied the Mongoloid races percolating from the Hīmālayan ranges or the people who acknowledged some sort of suzerainty under the Chinese empire (Rāmāyana, IV. 44. 12-14; Mahābhārata, II. 26. 9; 51, 23; III. 176; VI. 9). Their chief produce was skin as well as woollen textile and fabrics of jute and silk in which they specialized along with the people of Bāhli (pramāna-rāga-sparśādyam bāhli-cīna-samudbhavam Aurnaṅca rānkavaṅcaiva patajam kīṭajantathā, Mbh II.51. 26). In the Arthaśāstra Sāmūra, Cīnasa and Sāmūli are skins procured from Vahlava which according to Bhaṭṭaswāmī is the name of a country on the Hīmālayan borders; and the silk and jute fabrics have become famous Chinese luxuries in Indian market (tṛya kauṣeyam cīnapaṭṭaśca cīnabhūmiṣā vyākhyātāh II. 11). This is reminiscent of the verse in the Buddhavamsa, XXIV. II, which runs as: 'pallunnam cīnapaṭṭaṅca koseyyam kambalam pi ca.' The statements of the Mahābhārata, the Arthaśāstra and the Buddhavamsa are remarkably parallel and reflect approximately the same age which in the case of the Buddhavamsa cannot be earlier than the 1st century B.C. From Chinese and Indian sources it is definitely known that this flourishing intercourse between China and India began from the dawn of the Christian era.

No less significant is the reference to Ceylonese sandal as 'pārasamudraka' (II. 11, Bhaṭṭaswāmī's commentary). In the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea of which the date is conclusively fixed near about the 6th decade of the 1st century A.D. and in Pliny's Natural History which also belongs to the same century, Ceylon is referred to as Palisimundu.<sup>1</sup> Now Megasthenes knows Ceylon as

<sup>1</sup> For the identification of *Pārasamudra* with *Palisimundu* see Raychandhuri's note in *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XLVIII

Taprobane. The same name is seen in Aśoka's Edicts. The Rāmāyaṇa, however, knows it not only as Tāmrapaṇi but also as Sīṃhala and Lamkā. Had the name Pārasamudra been in vogue in the time of the original composition of the Rāmāyaṇa which is not far removed from the beginning of the Maurya Empire<sup>1</sup> it would most probably have been used by the author of the Epic. The Arthaśāstra is thus acquainted with a name that seems to have existed in the 1st century A.D. but not earlier.

The industrial guilds in the Arthaśāstra are a constant source of menace and dangerous rival to royal authority. Villages and agricultural operations are protected against their interference. They supply militia to the royal force and are alternately wooed or intrigued against by kings. They serve as state banks and by means of sinister cartels and cornerings influence price. This extraordinary growth of the *śreṇīs* into an incalculable political and economic force is suggested to have been a later development by a comparative study of the earlier and later Smṛtis and post-Christian inscriptions. In Manu and Yājñavalkya the cartel and corner systems are found in full swing, an unwholesome factor in the market raising and lowering price by their machinations. The banking function of the *śreṇīs* referred to in the Arthaśāstra (V. 2; VII. 11) is characteristic of a later age of thriving money transactions and speedy circulation of capital, and the earliest evidence we have of such operations is in Usavadāta's Nasik Inscription assigned to the 2nd century A.D.

The emergency tax or sur-tax of *pranaya* (V. 2) appears in the Arthaśāstra and in Rudradāman's Junagadh Rock Inscription but in no revenue or fiscal list of earlier literature or inscriptions.<sup>2</sup> What is more striking is that this levy is mentioned in the Arthaśāstra without reference to

<sup>1</sup> Winternitz · *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I

<sup>2</sup> See Raychaudhuri · *Political History of Ancient India*, 4th Edn., p. 8.

any controversy by the author, a levy on the justice of which there might well be some dispute. It may have been that the Sakas first introduced it and the earlier teachers were strangers to the tax or the distinct name by which it was known.

The Arthaśāstra inaugurates the important system of specifying dates in terms of regnal years and months, fortnights and days of an official year (Rājavarṣam māsaḥ pakso divasaśca vyustam II. 6). 'But so far as the written records of Aśoka hitherto discovered go he has nowhere mentioned the dates in terms of the year, month and day. It is in the Kuṣāna records that the dates have been stated for the first time in terms of the regnal year, and in that of the month and the day of an official year, cf. <sup>2</sup> Devaputrasya Kanīṣkasya sam 5 : he 1 di 1.' The specification of the date in term of the regnal year, and the month, half-month and day of an official year as enjoined in the Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra is a convention which is met with for the first time in the earliest Sanskrit inscription of Rudradāman (A.D. 150) 'Rudradāmano varse dvisaptatitame (72) Mārgaśīrṣabahuḥprati-padāyām' . . . . The convention once established was adhered to in later Sanskrit inscriptions.'<sup>1</sup>

In the state contemplated in the Arthaśāstra Sanskrit is the official language. It is almost an established fact that from the time of the Maurya Empire right up to the beginning of the Christian era various forms of Prākṛt remained popular and official language while Sanskrit was confined to the cultured few. This is suggested by coin-legends and inscriptions<sup>2</sup> as well as by the rise of the two famous grammatical works, that of Patañjali in the north and that of Sarvavarman in the south who moreover preludes his book (Kātantra) by quoting an anecdote to illustrate how ignorant even the kings had become of the sacred language.

<sup>1</sup> B. M. Barua - *Aśoka Edicts in New Light*, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> See Rhys Davids - *Buddhist India*, pp 134 36, 317-18



The grammatical works heralded the revival and popularization of Sanskrit to which the Arthaśāstra is a clear testimony.

The Arthaśāstra shows intimate acquaintance with the Purāṇas and with Epic literature not only in its main plot but in many of the subsidiary *ākhyānas* such as those of Nala, Vātāpi, Māṇḍavya, Dāṇḍakya, etc. and in the theories of the great preceptors and theoreticians who are represented therein. As pointed out by Jolly most of the authorities in the field of political and social sciences quoted in the Arthaśāstra figure in the Mahābhārata and these warn against fixing the age of its composition as high as 325 B.C.

These are not to deny that the Arthaśāstra contains much that must be thrown back to the 4th century B.C. or much earlier. As has been pointed out already, this is the general characteristic of *śāstra* literature that they present an ideal rather than real state of society and often pass earlier opinions as their own. Unlike the Mānava Dharmaśāstra the Arthaśāstra seems to be the composition of a single author but it does not follow that all he wrote was his own. In fact, he acknowledges his debt to his predecessors, a long list of whom frequently appears in the book. And in the process of taking from earlier authorities with or without acknowledgment theories and practices crept in the text which did not belong to the author's time.

It is tempting to synchronise a great treatise like the Arthaśāstra with the foundation of the biggest empire of ancient India. But the chicanery and intrigue, the ruthless police methods, the nightmare of sedition, the unscrupulous use of poison and women reflect not the formation of a stable empire, rather its bankruptcy and decadence. The vicious theory of circles of states speaks of the *mātsyanyāya* or primitive anarchy among bundles of independent and semi-independent statelings each with unlimited territorial ambition coalescing and splitting with

kaleidoscopic variety, faithlessness to allies and disrespect for treaties betray an absence of political morality which evoked scathing denunciation from Bāna the representative poet of another empire. The political philosophy of the Arthaśāstra fits not so well with Maurya imperialism as with an age of turmoil when local principalities were dissolving in internecine war.

A possible explanation of the testimony to Kautilyan authorship in later literature may be this. Kauṭilya or Cānakya or Viṣnugupta may not have been altogether a fictitious figure as supposed by Johnston<sup>1</sup> and Jolly. He is known both to the Brāhmanical tradition of the Mudrārāksasa and Viṣnupurāṇa and to the Buddhist tradition of the Mahāvamsa and Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa. But had he been the man behind the throne the historians of Alexander who wrote not solely upon Megasthenes' record but utilized plenty of materials now lost to us—Justin, Quintus Curtius, Arrian, Strabo and Plutarch for example,—would not have dismissed him with silent indifference while naming Candragupta and Nanda. Shamasastri fails to note that no literature earlier than from the 4th century A.D. mentions Kauṭilya or ascribes to him either the destruction of the Nandas or the composition of the Arthaśāstra or even quotes from the book. The Milindapañho, a work believed to be compiled about the 1st century A.D., speaks of Nanda, his general Bhaddasāla, their great battle with Candragupta and of the heavy carnage on both sides but not a word about Kautilya. Probably he was boosted by orthodox Brāhmanas during the zenith of the revivalist movement under the Guptas and it was sought to prove that the king, a Kṣatriya or a Sūdra, was a mere protégé of the Brāhmana chancellor. The claim was bolstered up by the ascription of a masterly digest of

political science to his authorship. The real author who hailed from a later age, remained obscure and was forgotten, liberally borrowed from earlier savants among whom Kauṭilya or Cāṇakya was one and may be, the chief, just as several other collections of political maxims were issued under the name of Cāṇakya held or supposed to be a crafty politician of antiquity ; and this may be a plausible explanation of the social and political institutions of widely separated ages reflected in the floating doctrines incorporated systematically in the book.

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## ADDITIONAL NOTES

*P. 46 L. 29.* The king is received by *grāmanīs* along with *ugras*, *pratyenasas* and *sūtas* who keep the guest house ready with food and drink (Br. Up. 4. 3. 37).

*P. 76 L. 11.* Flesh of the ox is prescribed directly in the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad (6. 4. 18).

*P. 90 L. 30.* Earlier literature speaks of 10 kinds of cereals (*dhānya*) grown in rural areas, viz., *vṛhi*, *yava*, *tīla*, *māsa*, *aṇu*, *priyaṅgu*, *godhūma*, *masura*, *khalva*, *khalakula* (*kulattība*) (Br. Up. 6. 3. 13).

*P. 361 L. 4.* According to Associated Press news of 19th June, 1945, more than 100 silver punch-marked coins belonging to the 4th century B.C. have been found in the Gorakhpur district and acquired by the U. P. provincial museum.

*P. 482 L. 10.* The Upaniṣads give an earlier glimpse into this epic rivalry centering round the issue of animal sacrifice. The priestly and orthodox party upholding animal sacrifice had their stronghold in the Kuru-Pāṇcāla country, the heterodoxy led by the Kṣatriyas was ascendant in the eastern countries of Kāśī, Kośala, Magadha and Videha which are in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa forbidden lands for the pure Brāhmaṇa of the Northern Aryan extraction. The Brāhmaṇas there, it is said, had lost their dignity because of submission to the Kṣatriyas. In the Bṛhadāranyaka and the Chandogya, Brāhmaṇa sages are represented as defeated in philosophical disputes with, or as learning philosophical truths from Kṣatriya kings. The culmination of this hostility on ideological plane is seen in the court of Janaka at Videha where Yājñavalkya, a Brāhmaṇa of the East had a hospitable seat to defeat in polemics the orthodoxy of the North and establish his thesis of Brahmanavidyā.

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